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# Ships

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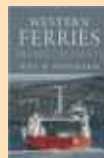


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**Top Drawings - The Battlecruiser HMS Hood** *Stephan Draminski* 36pp. PB. 297 x 210 mm £15.99 [34276]



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## EDITORIAL

Editor • Nicholas Leach  
sm.ed@kelsey.co.uk

Art Editor • Mark Hyde

## REGULAR CONTRIBUTORS

Andrew & Donna Cooke • Roy Cressey • Gary Davies • Jack Gaston • Nick Hall • William Mayes • Russell Plummer • Jim Shaw

## ADVERTISEMENT SALES

Talk Media • 01732 445325  
shipsmonthly.ads@kelsey.co.uk  
Production Supervisor • Amy Rutter  
01733 353365 or amy.rutter@kelsey.co.uk  
Jackie Aubrey Jackie.aubrey@kelsey.co.uk

## MANAGEMENT

Managing Director • Phil Weeden  
Chief Executive • Steve Wright  
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Finance Director • Joyce Parker-Sarioglu  
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Publishing Operations Manager • Charlotte Whittaker

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Overseas subscription orderline:  
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## Knowledgeable Ships readers

I am frequently surprised by how knowledgeable Ships Monthly's readers are, and how they can come up with answers to what I think are the most obscure queries. For example, the two photos of the fleet at the China Station (see Chartroom in SM, Feb for details) have generated plenty of interest, comments and ship identifications. I can only admit to being very impressed by the number of readers who offered their knowledge of the various ships which were pictured in the two unusual photographs. In fact, readers' thoughts about the photos are still coming in.

With the mystery ship feature, it is rare that the ship remains unidentified. Even when it does for one month, a contributor often comes in with the correct information the next month, as was the case with the paddlers on the Tamar (see SM, March). However, I made an error in my last editorial, stating that the new US Navy destroyer Zumwalt was the most expensive warship ever built. This is not the



*The US Navy's new \$4 billion warship Zumwalt is, perhaps surprisingly, not the most expensive ship.*



case, so I wonder if any reader can provide details of which warship does hold the title of the most expensive? And, indeed, what other ships have been particularly costly?

In this issue we have the usual variety of features, photos and news, which I hope will offer something to satisfy everyone. We go behind the scenes during the building of the cruise ship Royal Princess back in the 1980s, look at the story of the Cabin class rivals, and enjoy a rare glimpse of some Scottish-built paddlers still going strong in Bangladesh.

*Nich Leach*

**Nicholas Leach**  
Editor  
sm.ed@kelsey.co.uk



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## Contributors this month



### Conrad Waters

Trained as a lawyer but now working in banking, Conrad Waters has a long interest in naval history and current affairs, and wrote his first article for Ships Monthly in 1981.



### Thomas Rinaldi

Thomas Rinaldi is a writer and architectural designer based in New York. His books include Hudson Valley Ruins and New York Neon, a survey of New York's historic neon storefront signage.



### Krispen Atkinson

Krispen Atkinson was brought up in Truro, with the ports of Falmouth, Penzance and Fowey nearby instilling an interest in all kinds of shipping, from the smallest fishing boats to the largest tankers.



### David Brown

David Brown spent 48 years in the marine industry, with 33 years at sea from Cadet to Captain, and 15 years as a shoreside executive. He is now retired in the rank of Commodore.

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COVER China Shipping Line's 187,541gt container ship CSCL Arctic Ocean; news of ULCCs can be found in Cargo on page 16. **FOTOFILITE**

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The veteran Stena Line ferry Stena Europe swings away from her berth at Fishguard and heads off to Rosslare. **NICHOLAS LEACH**



## Built in Spain

### RESEARCH SHIP

Spain's Gondon Shipyard at Figueras has launched the new fishery and oceanographic research vessel Dr Fridtjof Nansen for the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD). Designed by Norway's Skipsteknisk, and to be operated by the Norwegian Institute of Marine Research, the 74.5m by 17.4m vessel will mainly operate in tropical and sub-tropical areas to improve developing countries' fisheries management.

The newbuilding has two MaK nine-cylinder diesel generator sets and one MaK six-cylinder diesel generator set to give a maximum speed of 14.5 knots. An 880kW retractable azimuth thruster has been fitted in the bow, along with a 600kW tunnel thruster. JS



**ABOVE** The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation will get its new research ship Dr Fridtjof Nansen later this year. GONDON SHIPYARD

## New tonnage for Great Lakes



### NEWBUILDS

Operators on the North American Great Lakes are continuing to take delivery of new tonnage, despite decreases in iron ore and coal loadings over the past year. Montreal-headquartered Fednav has placed six new Japanese-built vessels in service, all completed by Oshima Shipbuilding.

The 20,789gt Federal Bering, Federal Baltic, Federal Beaufort, Federal Barents, Federal Bristol and Federal Biscay measure 658ft (199.98m) by 77.9ft (23.76m) and are equipped with four 35-tonne capacity deck cranes

serving six box-shaped cargo holds. New propulsion technology combined with fine hull lines have cut their fuel consumption by 28 per cent over similar-sized bulkers built for Fednav just ten years ago.

Also adding tonnage on the Lakes is St Catharines, Ontario-based Algoma Central Corporation, which has five new ships being built by the 3 Maj Shipyard in Croatia and two at China's Jiangsu Yangzijiang Shipbuilding.

Three of the 3 Maj vessels will carry their discharge boom mounted forward, to give them more handling flexibility at several Great Lakes ports,



**ABOVE** The 20,600gt bulk carrier Federal Bering, seen shortly after being completed, is now in service in Canada.

**LEFT** The 24,100gt Algoma Equinox under way in the Welland Canal. CNW GROUP/ALGOMA CENTRAL CORPORATION

while the ships being built by Jiangsu Yangzijiang will feature standard rear-mounted unloading booms. All will have a cargo capacity of 29,300 tonnes at maximum Seaway draught.

Also fitted with a forward-mounted self-discharging boom is the 14,986dwt Manitoulin, a ship created by marrying the stern of the former Danish chemical tanker Lalandia Swan, built in 1991, with a new forebody built in China by the Chengxi Shipyard. The reconstructed ship is now trading for Rand Logistics, which operates nine Canadian-flagged and six US-flagged ships on the Great Lakes. JS

## First of ten for Arklow

### NEWBUILD

Arklow Vale, leadship of ten newbuilds on order for Arklow Shipping, which celebrates its 60th anniversary this year, made a first call to Dublin Port in January, having entered service the previous autumn. The 2,999gt newbuild was loaded with slag from Cijon, northern Spain and discharged the cargo at the South Bank Quay.

The 89m single hold Arklow Vale is a Royal Bodewes-built 5,100dwt Trader Series vessel, and was launched at the Dutch inland yard of Hoogezand, near Groningen. She has an energy-efficient bow developed by Groot Ship Design. Her maiden commercial voyage was from Ghent, Belgium to Pasajas in Spain. A sister, Arklow View is the second of the new series that are replacing an ageing trio of Dutch-built coasters. JA



Arklow Vale's first call at Dublin. JEHAN ASHMORE



The 2006-built LNG tanker Arctic Princess in Scapa Flow. MAGNUS BUDGE

## LNG transfer completed

### LNG TANKERS

A ship-to-ship transfer of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) was completed successfully between two vessels at anchor in Scapa Flow in January. In the fourth operation of its kind to take place in the Flow, the LNG was transferred between the tankers Excelerate and Arctic Princess.

The transfer was overseen by global STS service provider Fendercare Marine, with support from Orkney Islands Council Marine Services' pilots and launch crews, and three tugs operated by Orkney Towage. Due to extreme weather conditions, the

operation had to be suspended at one point, but when conditions improved, the transfer got under way.

Brian Archibald, the Council's Harbour Master and Head of Marine Services, Engineering and Transportation, said: 'All involved worked together to ensure that this was a safe and well-executed operation. We are pleased that the transfer of LNG was undertaken successfully, supported by our skilled teams in the safe anchorage of Scapa Flow'. The 121,597gt tanker Arctic Princess measures 288m by 49.04m, is Norwegian-flagged and is operated by Hoegh LNG Fleet Management.

# Con-ro Atlantic Star enters service



Atlantic Star makes her debut at Antwerp. FLOR VAN OTTERDYK

## CON-RO

Atlantic Star, the World's largest con-ro vessel, entered service in December for Grimaldi-owned Atlantic Container Line. The 100,530gt 296m British-flagged vessel, which is the first of a series of five G4 class vessels being built for ACL by Hudong-Zhonghua Shipbuilding, Shanghai, can carry 3,817TEU, 1,307 cars and 760 large

vehicle units. Designed by Danish ship architects Knud E. Hansen, the design carries twice the number of containers and offers a third more ro-ro capacity in a similar length than the 1984/85-built G3 class ships which are being replaced.

The innovative design sees all ro-ro cargo placed midships, with heavier, more densely-stowed containerised cargo stowed fore and aft, resulting

in greater stability and a more efficient use of space. ACL's weekly service connects Halifax, New York, Baltimore and Norfolk with Hamburg, Gothenburg, Antwerp and Liverpool.

After Atlantic Star arrived in Hamburg from China in December 2015, there was little time for familiarisation or port trials and the vessel departed Hamburg on her maiden voyage on 18 December, calling

at Gothenburg and Antwerp, before making a maiden call at Liverpool on Boxing Day, where port stevedores had to familiarise themselves with the vessel as they loaded her, as did the crew and Mersey river pilots.

Atlantic Star will be followed by Atlantic Sail, Atlantic Sea, Atlantic Sky and Atlantic Sun, which will enter service at approximately three-month intervals throughout this year. MD

## Migrants go for Spirit

### PORT NEWS

Traffic through Calais was brought to a standstill during the evening of 23 January after 400 migrants stormed the port, with around 40 managing to get aboard the P&O Ferries vessel Spirit of Britain. The incident followed a pro-migrant demonstration through Calais town centre, with a breakaway group catching police unawares and tearing a hole in a 10ft-high fence to gain access to the secure area.

A total of 24 migrants were arrested on Spirit of Britain and a further 11, believed to be from the No Borders activist group, were also detained and escorted off the ship. Natacha Bouchart, Deputy Mayor of Calais, immediately called for more support from the French Government in safeguarding the port after the migrants had veered off the agreed route for the march. Calais was closed for more than an hour, with P&O and DFDS Seaways vessels held until sailings resumed with delays of between one on two hours until into the night. RP

## Freight link started

### BRITTANY FERRIES

In early February Brittany Ferries started operating a new freight service between Poole and Bilbao in Northern Spain using the French-flagged Compagnie Maritime Nantaise ro-ro freight vessel Pelican (12,076gt), which carries around 100 unaccompanied trailers and 12 drivers.

During a 12-month charter with options for extensions, the ship will operate two round-trips a week. She

was built in Norway in 1999 and is powered by a single Wärtsilä diesel engine delivering 15,600kW at 500rpm, with a top speed of 20 knots.

'Freight activity to and from the United Kingdom is undergoing a period of strong growth, particularly the unaccompanied market,' said Brittany Ferries freight director Simon Wagstaff, who added: 'Our charter of Pelican will help meet growing demand from freight customers and free up more garage space on other ships.' RP



ABOVE The 1999-built ro-ro vessel Pelican has been chartered by Brittany Ferries.

## New DFDS vessels arrive

### DOVER FERRIES

The first of two former SeaFrance/MyFerryLink vessels chartered from Eurotunnel went into service for DFDS Seaways between Dover and Calais as Côte des Dunes in mid February, with near sister Côte des Flandres due to follow towards the end of the month.

Côte des Dunes, delivered by Aker Finnyards from Rauma, Finland as SeaFrance Rodin in 2001, and Côte des Flandres, completed in Saint-Nazaire by Chantiers de la Atlantique, as SeaFrance Berlioz four years later, were handed over to DFDS on 15 September 2015 and received major internal and external work in Dunkirk.

Accommodation for up to 2,000 passengers has been upgraded to bring them into line with other DFDS cruise ferries after the existing layout was removed. Each vessel's four Wärtsilä main diesel engines have been overhauled, as have the thrusters and rudders, while more than 9,000m<sup>2</sup> of Amtico laminate flooring has been laid. The pair were repainted in DFDS livery. RP



## Keel laid for Tallink flier



**ABOVE** An impression of Tallink's new Helsinki-Tallinn shuttle ferry Megastar.

### LNG FERRY

Just before a keel-laying ceremony on 9 February for Tallink's new LNG fast ferry due for delivery in 2017, it was announced that the 2,800-passenger vessel for the Helsinki-Tallinn shuttle route is to be named Megastar. The name was chosen following a competition and, according to Janek Stalmeister, chairman of the Tallink Grupp, it 'expresses perfectly the characteristics of the ship. It is also easy to pronounce in Estonian, Finnish and other languages.'

The 212m/49,000gt vessel, capable of 27 knots, will be built in a dry dock at the Meyer Yard in Turku, Finland, and, by using LNG fuel, will comply with the new and stricter emission regulations for the ECA areas, including the Baltic Sea. Tallink owns 17 vessels and operates under Tallink and Silja Line ships on six different routes, employing 7,000 people and annually handling up to nine million passengers. RP

## Tall Ships reach 60



The veteran tall ship Christian Radich took part in the first STI race 60 years ago. MAX

### UNDER SAIL

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the first tall ships race, which ran from Torbay to Lisbon. Initially seen as a one-off event, it later became biennial and then annual, with one 'four port/race-cruise-race series' event being held every year. This year the 'regular' STI race takes in Antwerp, Lisbon, Cadiz, and La Coruna, all ports which have hosted the race before.

The race after Antwerp will start in Torbay on 13 July, with the Parade of

Sail on the river Tagus, Lisbon, which is one of the best places to see the Tall Ships actually sailing. One entry – Norway's Christian Radich – was also involved in the first race in 1956, while another entrant not seen that often is the French barque Belem.

There is another event, the SCF Black Sea Tall Ships Regatta, which starts at from Constanta, Romania and sees the ships sail via the Russian ports of Novorossiysk and Sochi, ending in Varna, Bulgaria, visiting the same ports as in the first Black Sea regatta in 2014.

The best place to see the biggest fleet of tall ships in the UK this year will be Blyth in Northumberland at the end of August. Blyth is the start port for the second North Sea regatta, racing to Gothenburg in Sweden. The British contingent is led by the barque Lord Nelson and the gaff ketch Maybe. Christian Radich will be there, and the largest entry will probably be the Polish ship Dar Młodzieży. Other participants include the tall Polish brig Fryderyk Chopin and the more traditional-looking Dutch brig Morgenster. Max

## Classic liner to be saved?

### SS UNITED STATES

The SS United States Conservancy announced an agreement with Crystal Cruise Lines to launch a formal study to convert the former transatlantic ocean liner United States into a dedicated cruise ship at a press conference at New York on 4 February.

Under the agreement, the non-profit Conservancy will retain ownership of the vessel, currently moored at Philadelphia, while Crystal undertakes a nine-month 'technical feasibility study' of the proposed conversion. Crystal will cover the

ship's berthing fees during that time. The cruise line envisions a passenger capacity of 800 with a crew of 600.

Edie Rodriguez, Crystal Cruises' President and CEO, anticipates costs for the conversion to reach upwards of \$700 million. Other particulars, such as where the ship would be flagged and whether the conversion would require her to be re-engined, are yet to be determined, Rodriguez said. Preliminary renderings show extensive changes to the ship's profile, including the addition of balconies. Built in 1952, the liner has lain idle since 1969, and the Conservancy has owned her since 2011. TR

## French polar logistics

**ABOVE** France is to build a new 72m-long polar logistics and patrol icebreaker. WÄRTSILÄ



### PATROL ICEBREAKER

The PIRIOU yard at Concarneau, France has been contracted by the French government to build a 72m polar logistics and patrol icebreaker for Terre Australes et Antarctiques Françaises (TAAF) and the French Polar Institute (IPEV), with the vessel to be operated by the French Navy when completed in late 2017.

Based on a concept design issued by Marine Assistance (France), the

new icebreaker will utilise propulsion equipment to be supplied by Wärtsilä, including four Wärtsilä 20 main engines fitted with Wärtsilä NOx Reducer systems and two stainless steel propellers that will conform to the Bureau Veritas (BV) icebreaker 5 ice class rules. The new ship will have accommodation for 60 persons and a cargo capacity of 1,200 tonnes. Her first task is expected to be a resupply mission to the French Dumont d'Urville station in Antarctica. JS





# Arctic routes see downturn

Russia's icebreaker fleet, including the nuclear-powered *Rossiya*, have had fewer commercial ships to escort across the Northeast passage this year, but domestic transits have been on the rise. ATOMFLOT



## ARCTIC PASSAGES

With diminishing ice levels, both the Northwest and Northeast passages across the Arctic have seen an increase in commercial shipping traffic over the past half-decade, but recent low bunker prices have made the cold-water short-cuts less attractive.

The Northern Sea Route (NSR), across the top of Russia, has seen a substantial drop in transit traffic, from 1.3 million tons in 2013 to only 300,000 tons in

2014, and less than 100,000 tons by the end of last October, although domestic trade between Russian ports in the Arctic has been steadily increasing. The Northwest passage has seen even less use, although a number of small expedition-type cruise ships have been making seasonal full or partial transits, and two Finnish icebreakers employed in Shell's now cancelled Chukchi Sea drilling project off Alaska, *Nordica* and *Fennica*, returned home via the waterway.

However, Russia's Deputy Minister of Transport, Viktor Olersky, noted in the recent Arctic Circle 2015 conference that cargo being moved to and from Russian ports along the NSR has been increasing year by year, with over 4.5 million tons moved in 2015. Most of this increase has come from the substantial oil and gas development projects in the region. The NSR will not become a major alternative to the Suez Canal, but will play a crucial role in Russia's Arctic development projects. JS

# Europa set to return

## FERRY MOVEMENTS

*Silja Europa* (see SM, March Ship of the Month) is being restored to boost capacity for Tallink's Helsinki-Tallinn route, which will also continue to be served by fast ferries *Superstar* (2008/36,227gt) and *Star* (2007/36,249gt), as well as the cruise ferry *Baltic Queen* (2009/48,915gt).

Most of 1993-built/59,912gt *Silja Europa*'s passenger areas, including the cabins, restaurants, shops and show bar, will be renovated, and most of the restaurants and on-board shops will be refurbished. Newly returned from a charter as an accommodation vessel to Bridgemans Services, *Silja Europa* starts sailings on the Helsinki-Tallinn route while *Superstar* and *Baltic Queen* go for refit. RP

# Dun Laoghaire cruise port?



The Finnish-built cruise ship *Mein Schiff 4* anchored unusually close to shore when visiting Dun Laoghaire on 18 September 2015. JEHAN ASHMORE

## PORT NEWS

Dun Laoghaire Harbour Company have announced plans for an €18 million single-berth cruise terminal in the centre of the harbour. This has proved to be very controversial, as the harbour is the centre of Irish sailing, and there are major concerns about cruise ships occupying the area.

At present, cruise ships have to berth outside the harbour, and passengers are tendered ashore. TUI Cruises' 2,506-passenger newbuild *Mein Schiff 4* made her debut in 2015 and called at Dun Laoghaire while on an 11-day round trip from Hamburg. She returns to the Irish port to open the 2016 season, and a further seven cruise ships are also scheduled to call. JA

## BRIEF NEWS

**RAMSGATE PORT** • The first shipment of 1,000 cars through the Port of Ramsgate took place on 20 January, when the car carrier *Autopremier* arrived in the Kent port. The new service is operated by GEFCO UK Ltd under licence from Thanet District Council, which owns the port facilities at Ramsgate and expects to import around 500,000 vehicles annually. Ramsgate has been struggling to find clients for the port since TransEuropa Ferries went bankrupt in April 2013. PB

**CHURCHILL FOR SALE** • Denver, Colorado-headquartered OmniTRAX is negotiating to sell Canada's Port of Churchill, Manitoba and its 627-mile-long connecting rail line following the ending of the Canada Wheat Board's grain export monopoly, which has reduced shipments through the Hudson Bay gateway to less than 150,000 tonnes annually. JS

**NEW IN JAPAN** • The new ferry *Bizan* has recently been introduced, and is the first of the replacement ferries being built by Saeki Heavy Industry, Oita for Ocean Tokyu Ferry Co. The new 13,500gt vessel measures 191m by 27m and is mainly intended to carry freight, having a passenger capacity of only 266.

**NEW TANKER** • The Ardmore Shipping Corporation, a Bermuda-based operator of product and chemical tankers, has taken delivery of the 25,233dwt *Ardmore Chippewa* from Japan's Fukuoka Shipbuilding and the 49,999dwt *Ardmore Seahawk* from South Korea's SPP Shipbuilding as the final units of two four-shipbuilding programmes. Their delivery has brought the Ardmore fleet up to 24 vessels, which have an average age of five years, the oldest having been built in 2002. *Ardmore Chippewa* (pictured) measures 159m by 27m. JS



## BRIEF NEWS

**NO ROUTE** • One of the least unexpected announcements was that from new company Regina Line, which will not be starting a service between Esbjerg and Harwich planned to fill a gap left by the closure in autumn 2014 of the long-established DFDS route. Regina Line had proposed chartering the ferry Regina Baltica (1980/18,345gt), which served as a floating hotel in Shetland before she was sold last year to Scandinavian interests, but said the vessel was no longer available to start a planned charter from February.

**ROLE FOR GEORGE** • Kevin George, managing director of Red Funnel Ferries, has been appointed Chairman of Discover Ferries, the industry organisation formed by 12 operators providing services in and out of British ports to promote travel by ferry. He replaces Stephen Tuckwell, long-time Communications Director at Brittany Ferries.

**LORIENT SERVICE** • The contract to construct a new ferry for the French service from Lorient to Ile de Groix has gone to Piriou of Concarneau. The vessel will be 43.5m long, with space for 300 passengers and 18 cars. The size of the harbour at Port Tudy on the island precludes a larger vessel. The new ferry will join current ship Ile de Groix (2008), while Saint Tudy (1985) will become a reserve ship for the Groix-Belle-Ile route, replacing the 1971-built Acadie.

# P&O enjoys freight boost



**ABOVE** Pride of Rotterdam departs Hull on her regular North Sea crossing. NICHOLAS LEACH

## NORTH SEA

P&O Ferries achieved an 11 per cent increase in the number of HGVs using the Hull-Rotterdam Europoort service during 2015, representing more than 5,000 extra vehicles, which boosted the year's total carried by 59,925gt sisterships Pride of Hull and Pride of Rotterdam, delivered from Fincantieri's yard at

Marghera, Venice in 2001, to 52,000.

The P&O terminal at Europoort has benefitted from a 250m rail extension, handling longer freight trains from Central and Eastern Europe to enhance capacity and efficiency. Loading and discharge at both Hull and Europoort is among the fastest in the sector.

The news follows a strong 2015 P&O Ferries performance on the English

Channel, including the highest ever volume of freight between Dover and Calais during the July-September quarter, a 30 per cent year-on-year increase. P&O Ferries serve nine major routes between Britain, France, Ireland, Holland and Belgium, operating 20 vessels, which carry more than ten million passengers, 1.6 million cars and two million freight units every year.

# Condor Liberation stopped by damage

## WESTERN CHANNEL

Condor Ferries' passenger and car services between Poole and the Channel Islands were at a standstill for almost a week until Tuesday 5 January, after the trimaran Condor Liberation suffered belting damage when she was blown against the berth as 55-knot winds lashed the Dorset port.

During the storm, which had already brought cancellation of Condor Liberation's scheduled 30 December 2015 trip to Guernsey and Jersey, crew members worked with harbour staff to place extra protection between the ship and berth to prevent further damage.

To compensate, additional crossings were provided from Portsmouth over the weekend by Condor's conventional vessels, ro-pax Commodore Clipper and freight ro-ro Commodore Goodwill.

Condor welcome a new chief executive from the beginning of May, with Paul Luxon replacing Russell Kew,

CEO since 2009, who left the company in December 2015. A Guernsey resident who has worked in the Channel Islands for more than 25 years, Mr Luxon is well-known in political and business life as current Chair of the Jersey Hospitality Association Strategy Group and an elected Deputy of the States of Guernsey.



Condor Liberation has been in the wars. TONY RIVE

## FERRIES IN THE NEWS ... FERRIES IN THE NEWS ... FERRIES IN THE NEWS ... FERRIES IN THE NEWS ... FERRIES IN THE NEWS



**NORD PAS-DE-CALAIS** • Eurotunnel plans to support its fixed link operations using the 7,264gt former SeaFrance/MyFerry Link ro-ro vessel, seen at Dover Eastern Docks, have been ruled out by the French Supreme Court.

**OCTAVIA** • The Stockholm archipelago's latest passenger vessel was delivered in the second week of December 2015 after being completed at Kokkola, Finland by Kewatec Aluboot. She is 23.7m long and can carry 200 passengers at speeds of up to 20 knots, with on-board accommodation including a saloon and an open upper deck. Octavia is based on the island of Ornö, and her operator, Haninge Charter & Sjötaxi, also runs the motor vessels Langvik and Ramsö from the Southern Archipelago island.

**PRINCESS MARIA** • St Peter Line started 2016 with three months of one-ship sailings linking St Petersburg, Tallinn, Helsinki and Stockholm by the former DFDS vessel. Princess Anastasia (ex-Pride of Bilbao) is chartered out until a full service resumes in April.



**BERLIN** • Scandlines' hopes of getting Berlin into service between Gedser and Rostock during December 2015 were dashed when an engine room switchboard fault brought more delays. Now a possible service debut is set for this coming Easter. Berlin remains at Fayard, Denmark with sistership Copenhagen, which is not expected to appear until the summer. Major works include the removal of 1,100 tonnes of steelwork to reduce deadweight, with upper decks now built in lighter materials.



# Larne-Troon service closed

## NORTH CHANNEL

The widely expected closure of the loss-making Irish Sea high-speed service between Larne and Troon was confirmed by P&O Ferries in mid-January, route vessel, the 91m Incat Express, having completed a long-term charter from Balearia last September. She has since been sold to Swedish operator Gotlandsbatan.

P&O said the decision to drop the route, provided on a seasonal basis since 2003, was taken after a review of options, with all North Channel emphasis now on the Larne-Cairnryan route. There will be no redundancies, as all permanent staff have been found alternative roles within the company.

After negotiations with a number of suppliers and other organisations, including the search for a lower cost

chartered fast craft for Troon, P&O admit to being unable to develop a solution.

Now the Larne-Cairnryan service continues, with up to seven sailings each way a day using European Causeway and European Highlander, delivered from Japan by Mitsubishi in 2000 and 2002. They are to receive £500,000 of onboard improvements during the next 18 months, and over 50 seats will be added to each ship.



ABOVE European Causeway in Loch Ryan, approaching P&O's Cairnryan terminal. RUSSELL PLUMMER

## Townsend veteran sinks



## INDONESIA

Indonesian ferry BSP III (pictured), which rolled over and sank due to a water leak while under repair in Bojonegara, Banten Province, was originally delivered in 1973 as the last of seven 'Free Enterprise' vessels built by Werft Gusto in Schiedam, Amsterdam.

She served Townsend Car Ferries as Free Enterprise VII from Dover to Calais and later to Zeebrugge with sister Free Enterprise VI. Rebuilding in Bremerhaven, along with FEVI during winter 1984-85, saw the whole superstructure lifted off for the creation of a full height upper vehicle before they became Pride of Walmer and Pride of Sandwich. After service as Pride of Rathlin and Pride of Ailsa, the former FEVII was sold to Jakarta-based operator Sungi Budi.

# Stena ring the changes

## IRISH SEA

Stena Line's Irish Sea fleet's refit programme lasted into early March, and started when Stena Flavia (2008/26,904gt) arrived from the Gothenburg-Frederikshavn route in mid-January to release Stena Horizon (2006/27,522gt) from the former Celtic Link service linking Rosslare and Cherbourg, while Stena Gothica (1982/13,294gt) covered in Scandinavia.

Visentini series vessel Stena Horizon was the first into drydock at Harland and Wolff in Belfast, from 14 to 28

January. She then spent more than a month on the Dublin-Holyhead run while Stena Superfast X (2002) underwent an in-water survey lasting a couple of days, and then headed north to cover the refits of 2001-built Belfast-Cairnryan sisterships Stena Superfast VII and Stena Superfast VIII.

Stena Adventurer (2003/43,532gt) went to Harland and Wolff from 16 February to 7 March. Rosslare-Fishguard route veteran Stena Europe (1981/24,828gt) was at A&P Falmouth for three weeks from 16 February, but there was no direct replacement

# MacBrayne set new targets

## SCOTTISH FERRIES

With David MacBrayne set to become operator of the Marchwood Military Port through its joint venture company, Solent Gateway, chief executive Martin Dorchester has identified their next targets. These are gaining a new contract for Clyde and Western Isles ferry services and winning back the £234 million Northern Isles operation to Orkney and Shetland, which went to Serco in 2012.

After securing a three-year Clyde/Western Isles extension, he is confident

of beating Serco when Transport Scotland unveils the winner of the £1 billion long-term contract after the Scottish Parliament elections in May

Transport Scotland is expected to unveil the new tender for the Northern Isles services from Aberdeen to Kirkwall and Lerwick, together with the shorter Scrabster-Stromness run, in 2017 before it is awarded in 2018. Although they lost out last year when bidding for the Swedish ferry links with the island of Gotland, Mr Dorchester says MacBrayne has proved its ability to win new business with the Marchwood contract.

THE NEWS ... FERRIES IN THE NEWS ... FERRIES IN THE NEWS ... FERRIES IN THE NEWS ...



**EUROPEAN SEAWAY** • To meet high demand, P&O Ferries brought the 1991-built/22,986gt freight ro-ro back into service earlier than planned. After charter spells as a wind farm support vessel, she resumed Calais sailings on 7 January.

**CARRIER** • The 1998-built freighter and her sistership Trader, formerly owned by Eckerö Shipping, have been bought by Finnlines, who previously operated them on charter along with Transfennica, the ownership change taking place with the pair lying at Tallinn in Estonia. The 1,775-lane-metre Carrier, renamed Finncarrier, and Trader as Finnmaster, are expected to replace the chartered Misana and Misida, which have been sold by Godby Shipping to Stena RoRo.

**AMORELLA** • The long-serving Viking Line vessel, running from Stockholm to Turku since 1988, missed a 7 January sailing from the Swedish capital after the aluminium strengthening to her helipad cracked in temperatures down to minus 28 degrees.



**EXPRESS SANTORINI** • Chartered each summer since 2007 to Atlantico Line for Azores inter-island services, the 1974-built former French SNCF English Channel ferry Chartres (4,580gt) was used on the Northern Aegean services of owners Hellenic Seaways during January and February, standing in for Express Pegasus (1977/8,291gt). Carrying 1,915 passengers and 230 cars, Express Santorini first served in Greece for Agapitos Express Ferries from 1993.

## Sleek yacht



**ABOVE** Impression of the expedition cruise ship. OLIVER DESIGN SPAIN

### SCENIC CRUISES

In November 2015 the Uljanik Shipyard at Rijeka, Croatia announced that it had an order for an expedition cruise ship, but gave no further details. Now it has emerged that the yard, well known for building tankers and small bulk carriers and working on oil and gas platforms, is to build what has been termed as the first expedition cruising yacht.

The design appears to be the work of Oliver Design in Spain, but the owner is Australia's Scenic Cruises, operator of river cruises in Europe and Asia. Although the company sells itineraries on other cruise ships, this is a first venture with its own ship. Scenic Eclipse will be around 16,500gt and carry just 228 passengers. The hull will be built to 1A super ice class and the ship will carry two small helicopters.

## Expedition ship changes hands

### LINDBLAD

Lindblad Expedition Holdings has entered into an agreement to purchase the 2005-built Via Australis (2,716gt) from Chile's Cruceros Australis, with delivery in the late spring. The ship operates for her current owner in the Patagonia,

Tierra del Fuego and Cape Horn area, carrying up to 126 passengers.

That capacity will be reduced to 96 when she is refitted for Lindblad, with the 64 passenger cabins reduced to 50, including four singles. Cruceros Australis are said to be ready to build a replacement for Via Australis, as the

company is now down to a single ship, having sold Mare Australis to Galapagos operator ETICA. Interestingly, the Galapagos Islands is the destination of Via Australis when the ship enters service for Lindblad, replacing the 1966-built National Geographic Endeavour, converted from a trawler in 1983.



**Via Australis**  
sold to Lindblad.  
CRUCEROS AUSTRALIS



**Norwegian Epic** was the first ship to be given Norwegian Edge. WILLIAM MAYES

## Norwegian has the Edge

### NCL

Norwegian Edge is not the name of the next new ship, but is the term coined by NCL to describe the major programme of investment and enhancement of its fleet and overall product. Although the name has only recently been announced, the programme actually began in October 2015 with the refit of Norwegian Epic, followed by that of Norwegian Gem in November.

The programme largely focuses on refurbishing or rebranding public rooms, but outdoor spaces are being enhanced too, with particular emphasis on the Haven areas. In

spring 2016 Pride of America and Norwegian Sun will have their refits, followed in the summer by Norwegian Dawn. Autumn and winter will see attention given to Norwegian Spirit, Sky and Pearl, while the last ship in the current programme, Norwegian Jade, will be dealt with in spring 2017.

Never one to miss an opportunity to extract money from passengers, NCL is introducing an extra-charge à la carte menu in the so-called complimentary main dining rooms. The next new ship to be delivered to NCL will be the as-yet-unnamed, second vessel of the Breakaway Plus class, which is destined for the Chinese market.

## Le Boreal off for repairs

### PONANT CRUISES

Following the major engine room fire aboard the 2010-built expedition cruise ship Le Boreal back in November while she was sailing in Antarctic waters, and subsequent inspections in Chile, it was decided to bring the ship back to Europe for repairs.

Where the work is to be carried out is not known, but, as she will be repaired in Europe rather than South America, it seems that the damage may be quite extensive. The remainder of Le

Boreal's Antarctic season for 2015/16 has been cancelled, and her next cruise, in Europe, is now advertised as commencing in early May.

French operator Ponant Cruises contracted Dutch Offshore Contractors, who in turn hired the Chinese heavy lift vessel Kang Sheng Kou, which loaded the 10,944gt Le Boreal at the Chilean port of Punta Arenas on 15 January, for her return to Europe. Sailing from Punta Arenas on 20 January, she is expected to arrive in Genoa around 16 February.



**ABOVE** Le Boreal after loading on the Chinese-owned semi-submersible ship Kang Sheng Kou at Punta Arenas, Chile on 15 January. DUTCH OFFSHORE CONTRACTORS





Happier days  
in Istanbul.  
WILLIAM MAYES

# More ports dropped

## INDUSTRY NEWS

One wonders just how close we are in the cruise industry to boarding our ship at its safe and secure home port and floating around within sight of it for a week before disembarking. Well, in the Mediterranean it just got a bit closer. NCL and its subsidiary brands,

Oceania and Regent Seven Seas, have dropped calls at all Turkish ports for 2016 in response to the recent terrorist attack in Sultanahmet Square in Istanbul. MSC, too, has dropped its calls at both Istanbul and Izmir, which affects MSC Magnifica in particular.

Replacement ports will be Piraeus and Mykonos. Crystal Cruises became

the latest to abandon Turkey, having dropped calls at Istanbul and Kusadasi.

With much of the Black Sea, the Levant and North Africa now off limits to many mainstream cruise lines, an ever-increasing number of ships and an ever decreasing number of destinations, there could be some very crowded ports in the coming year.

## New record

### VALLETTA PORT

The Maltese capital Valletta had its best year ever in terms of cruise passengers throughput in 2015. The 306 cruise calls brought almost 670,000 passengers, ten per cent more than the previous record year, 2012. With the effective closure of all the North African ports closest to Malta, Valletta was an obvious alternative. The busiest day was 22 July, when 13,500 cruise passengers were handled. The forecast for 2016 shows a ten per cent growth in passenger numbers to 740,000.

The port's current facilities can handle three ships, but there are plans to extend the quayside to provide additional berths. Valletta is currently the only place in the Maltese Islands where cruise ships can dock, but there are also plans to build a new terminal as part of the development of an old quarry on the eastern side of the island of Gozo. Still in the planning stage, this facility is not likely to see its first ship until 2022.



ABOVE Valletta port has expansion plans. WILLIAM MAYES

## Mein next new ship



ABOVE Mein Schiff 5 floating-out ceremony in Finland. MEYER TURKU

### TUI CRUISES

On 15 January, in a snowy Turku, Finland, the next in the six-ship series of cruise vessels under construction by Meyer Turku for TUI Cruises, Mein Schiff 5, was floated out of her building dock. This is a milestone ship in the history of the yard, as she is the first to be built completely within the period in which Meyer have owned the shipyard.

She will undergo several months of fitting out before joining TUI Cruises in July. Her maiden voyage will be a nine-night cruise from Kiel, starting on 15 July, which will take her around the eastern Baltic to Tallinn, St Petersburg, Helsinki and Stockholm

before she returns. During the European summer she will cruise the Baltic, Norwegian Fjords and western European coastlines.

The 99,500gt ship, measuring 295m by 36m, has a passenger capacity of 2,534 in two-berth cabins (82 per cent exterior with balconies) over 15 decks, looked after by a crew of 1,000.

Her sistership, Mein Schiff 6, is expected to follow about a year later. It now emerges that the next two ships, Mein Schiff 7 and 8, will be about 20m longer, at 315m in length, and will have a gross tonnage of 111,500. They will also, presumably, have a higher passenger capacity, but that has not yet been announced.

## BRIEF NEWS

**PRINCESS CRUISES** • Grand Princess lost power on 30 November 2015 when about 20 nautical miles off Hawaii Island. The ship proceeded to Honolulu for repairs and the remainder of the cruise was cancelled. It was thought that a small engine room fire caused the problem.

**AZAMARA** • Azamara Journey is the first of Azamara Cruises' two ships to be dry-docked, for a major refit and interior upgrade, at the Grand Bahama Shipyard. Azamara Quest, will have a refit in April in Singapore.

**CARNIVAL** • Carnival Inspiration has recently gone for a major dry docking and refit lasting three weeks at Portland, Oregon. Internal works include the provision of new bars and restaurants. The ship was back in service on her Baja, Mexico cruises from Long Beach in early February.

**GENTING HONG KONG** • Genting took full control of the Lloyd Werft shipyard at Bremerhaven in December 2015, in anticipation of the start of construction of the three ships for subsidiary Crystal Cruises.

**CUBA** • Time is running out for three cruise lines that have been selling cruises to Cuba under 'the people to people' programme, one of the ways in which US citizens are allowed to visit Cuba, as the Cuban authorities have not yet granted licences, and two lines apparently do not have berth space booked in Miami. Haimark Line was supposed to begin on 11 February and Pearl Seas Cruises soon afterwards. Carnival Corporation's fathom operation, using the P&O Cruises' ship Adonia, has Miami space booked, but no permission from Cuba.

**STAR CRUISES** • The homeport of Superstar Virgo is now moved from Hong Kong to Guangzhou, from where she began sailing on 3 January. She is operating alternate five- and two-night cruises. The former calls at Halong Bay and Danang, while the shorter trips go to Hong Kong.



## China's carrier quest

### CHINESE NAVY

Speculation that China is in the midst of building its first domestic aircraft carrier has been confirmed by Ministry of National Defence officials. The news comes as no surprise, with a ship of similar size and shape of such a vessel under construction, in plain sight, at a dry dock in Dalian shipyard.

The Type 001A is reported by Chinese state-controlled media to be a modified version of the aircraft carrier Liaoning, using the Soviet Kuznetsov class design as a template.

This would indicate a ship of around 50,000-60,000 tonnes, with a short take-off and arrested recovery (STOVAR) configuration for operating Shenyang J-15 Flying Shark jets. The fighter aircraft is also an unlicensed copy of Russian technology, in this case the Sukhoi Su-33 'Flanker.'

With the experience gained from Liaoning, the new ship will feature more mature technology, with improved coordination between its systems, but will not be fitted with catapults. Observers suggest construction of the ship is sufficiently advanced for it to be launched in late 2016, with an in-service date as early as 2019. Future carriers could be of differing evolutionary designs as China gets to grips with newer technologies.



A speculative view of how China's first indigenous carrier could look, catapult system aside.

## Amphibious role for carriers

### ROYAL NAVY

As stated in the Strategic Defence and Security Review, the QE class carriers are to be redesigned to boost the navy's amphibious capabilities. Each ship will be modified to accommodate 900 Royal Marines and aviation personnel, in addition to the Ship's Company. This is 210 more embarked forces than the helicopter carrier HMS Ocean offers at present.

In addition to extra berths, the enhancements are likely to include the widening of corridors to allow fully-equipped Marines to move through the ship more easily. Prince

of Wales is to be completed with the modifications and Queen Elizabeth retrofitted at a future date.

The 750-tonne Aft Island for the second of class has been added to the flight deck following its arrival from Glasgow. The structure is designed to control aircraft operations aboard the aircraft carrier.

The first of class is due to conduct sea trials towards the end of the year for delivery in early 2017. A new Damen ART 80-32 tug will also be delivered to support berthing operations at the renamed Princess Royal Jetty, which is currently known as Middle Slip Jetty, at Portsmouth Naval Base.

## Coast Guard sees red



The USCG hopes to start production of a new heavy icebreaker to replace the Polar class by 2020 despite having no budget in place. US COAST GUARD

### US COAST GUARD

The US Coast Guard is to accelerate its timetable for the acquisition of a new fleet of icebreakers for polar operations. At present they only have one heavy icebreaker, which is 40 years old, and one medium icebreaker which are operational. A second heavy icebreaker was placed in inactive status in 2011 and is sometimes cannibalised to help keep the other one going.

The strategy is in response to concerns that the United States

risks not having enough capacity to carry out search and rescue and oil spill response missions as the melting sea ice in the region opens up the Arctic to increased tourism and oil exploration.

With US missions being undertaken in both the Arctic and Antarctic, and the latter requiring an ocean voyage of 10,000 miles, a recent study concluded that the Coast Guard needs at least two heavy icebreakers, although three heavy and three medium-sized vessels is the long-term goal.

The Aft Island for Prince of Wales was lifted onto the flight deck on 8 January. She will be structurally complete by mid-2016. BAE SYSTEMS





# Underway Oiler under way

The US Navy has started the replacement of its Henry J. Kaiser class underway replenishment tankers.

US NAVY



## US NAVY

The US Navy's programme for a new series of 17 oilers, hitherto known as TAO(X), is to be named the John Lewis (TAO-205) class. The ships, the final design of which has yet to be determined, will replace the current fleet of Henry J. Kaiser tankers, which

will begin to reach the end of their service lives in 2021. The Navy wants to procure the first TAO-205 later this year and the remaining 16 at a rate of one per year during the period 2018-2033.

The double-hulled ships are to have similar capabilities to those they are replacing, relying on existing rather than new technologies. At the time

of writing, a shipyard to build the first of class had yet to be announced, although it will be one of either NASSCO or Ingalls Shipbuilding. The award of a construction contract for the first six vessels is linked to other projects for the amphibious assault ship, LHA-8, and design work on a new class of 11 amphibious ships, known as the LX(R).

## Type 42 resurfaces

### ARGENTINE NAVY

The Argentine Navy has refloated the former ARA Santsima Trinidad, almost two years after she capsized at Puerto Belgrano. The Type 42 destroyer, the only one of the class to be built outside the UK, was already in a dilapidated state before she sank in January 2013.

With British sanctions denying spare parts to maintain the navy's two destroyers following the Falklands War, she was often cannibalised to keep her sistership, ARA Hercules, operational. By 2004 she was laid up for good. As she continued to deteriorate through lack of maintenance, a cracked pipe caused severe flooding and she sank at her berth.

The Navy hopes to persuade the new Argentine government to fund her conversion into a museum, dedicated to her role in events leading up to the 1982 Falklands War, when she led an Argentine task force as part of the so-called Rosario Operation.

## Trailblazer bows out

### INDIAN NAVY

The Indian Navy has retired INS Godavari, the country's first indigenously designed and built warship. The Project 16 frigate was decommissioned at Mumbai on 23 December 2015 after 32 years of service.

At the time of her introduction, she was showcased around the world as a symbol of India's growing self-reliance and military might. As such, she took part in numerous operations and deployments across the Indian Ocean and beyond, including anti-piracy patrols in the Gulf of Aden.

The name vessel of a class of three steam-powered frigates, Godavari was armed with Russian, Western and

Indian missiles and weapon systems, a mix that was not always compatible. She was also one of the first frigates in the world capable of carrying two Sea King helicopters.

The influence of the Indian-built Nilgiri class gunships, which were based on the ubiquitous British Leander class, is clear to see from her profile, and was also carried over to the follow-on Brahmaputra (Project 16A) class. The Indian Navy has since produced 17 warship designs, ranging from small craft to a number of classes of destroyers and frigates, and also an aircraft carrier. With 80 indigenous warships built, the MoD has directed that all future orders are to be built by domestic shipyards.



**ABOVE** India's first guided-missile frigate has been decommissioned. US NAVY

## BRIEF NEWS

**ROYAL NAVY** • The First Patrol Boat Squadron's 16-strong fleet of P2000 patrol boats are to get a new lease of life, 30 years after they entered service. Each is to receive a major overhaul that includes the replacement of their original twin Perkins diesels with new Caterpillar engines and an advanced electronic control system to reduce emissions and fuel consumption. The upgrade is designed to extend the life of the 55-tonne vessels by 15 years.

**BANGLADESHI NAVY** • Bangladesh has taken delivery of a pair of Chinese-built corvettes. BNS Shadhinota (F 111) and BNS Prottoy (F 112) arrived at Chittagong on 10 January. The 90m vessels are similar to the PLAN's Type-056, displacing 1,500-tonnes each, and are equipped with Chinese anti-surface and anti-air missile systems. Two more of the class are to be constructed at the navy-operated Khulna Shipyard under a technology transfer agreement, with an in-service date of 2019.

**EGYPTIAN NAVY** • High-spending Egypt plans to equip its newly-acquired Mistral class helicopter carriers with 46 Kamov Ka-52K attack helicopters. They are the same aircraft that Russia had intended to fly from the ships, prior to the deal collapsing because of international sanctions. Each ship will carry up to 16 naval versions of the Russian equivalent of the US Apache. With work to remove classified Russian communications equipment completed, the ships are on course to be handed to Egypt by mid-2016.

**ISRAELI NAVY** • The PM was in attendance to greet INS Rahav (Splendour), Israel's latest submarine, upon her arrival at the port city of Haifa on 12 January. The new addition is the fifth of six Dolphin class vessels, built in Kiel to a design tailored to Israeli specifications, adapted from the Type 212. A sixth and final vessel is under construction. A third of the cost of the project is being funded by Germany.

## Mercator sells ships

### BULKERS

Mercator Lines Singapore, a subsidiary of Mercator India, is selling off its bulk carrier fleet following a continuous decline in the Baltic Dry Index, which fell to 369 points, almost 100 points below the record low set in 1985, in mid-January, because of an over-supply in the sector and low freight rates. The company has already disposed of the bulk carriers Kesari Prem, Gauri Prem and Sri Prem Aparna. JS



**ABOVE** The 40,488gt Gauri Prem is one of a number of ships being disposed of by Singapore's Mercator.

## Record breaker at London Gateway

Al Muraykh at London Gateway.

ANDREW MCALPINE



### PORT NEWS

On 2 January DP World London Gateway Port welcomed one of the world's largest container ships, carrying a recorded 18,601TEU. The UASC-owned Al Muraykh called at London Gateway to unload 3,800 containers. According to UASC, when it announced the unprecedented westbound shipment, it was also the line's highest utilisation to date of the eco-efficient A18 class, meaning the CO<sub>2</sub> output per TEU on this journey was more than 60 per cent

lower than if the same containers had been on board a 13,500TEU ship.

The ship measures 400m in length and the containers are loaded 11 high above deck and 23 across. The ship left Malaysia's Port Klang carrying the largest ever number of containers on board a vessel and arrived at London Gateway as her first call in Europe due to berth unavailability at Felixstowe.

Commenting on the record-breaking load, UASC Chief Operating Officer Waleed Al Dawood, said: 'We are extremely proud to have achieved

a world-record-breaking load on board Al Muraykh, the greenest vessel in the world and one of the largest in operation. This voyage marks a very important milestone in our newbuilding and environmental sustainability programme.'

Launched in 2015, Al Muraykh is the second of the UASC A18 class ships, which are being built by Hyundai Samho Heavy Industries in Mokpo, South Korea. The 195,636 ULCC has a declared capacity of 18,600TEU and is deployed on UASC's AEC1 service.

## Victim of the storm

### CASUALTY

One of the largest ships to be damaged by the recent Storm Desmond was taken to A&P Group's Tyneside yard for repairs in December 2015. The vehicle carrier City of Rotterdam collided with the ro-ro cargo ship Primula Seaways on the Humber Estuary when the storm hit the north of England at the end of 2015.

A&P Group's 100-strong Tyneside team completed structural steel

repairs and the vessel returned to service at the end of January. Darren Brown, managing director of A&P Group Tyne said: 'It was quite a spectacle to see the storm-damaged ship coming up the Tyne. We made a temporary repair to the damage at Immingham in order for her to be able to sail to the Tyne.'

A&P Group operates seven dry docks across three UK locations. The 21,143gt vehicle carrier City of Rotterdam was built in 2011.



**ABOVE** City of Rotterdam in A&P Hebburn dry dock on 13 January, having arrived from Immingham in December 2015. KEN SHORT

## Oman builds up fleet



**ABOVE** The Oman Shipping Company is adding ten new medium-range product tankers to a fleet that already includes some heavyweights, such as the 319,901dwt VLCC Mazyonah, built in 2009. OMAN SHIPPING COMPANY

### TANKERS

Middle East owner Oman Shipping Company (OSC) has taken delivery of the first of ten medium-range (MR) product tankers it had ordered from South Korean builder Hyundai Mipo Dockyard at Ulsan, with all of the ships expected to be working under long-

term charters to Shell International Trading and Shipping Company Ltd by the end of the year.

Each of the new tankers, led by the 29,354gt Muscat Silver, measures 83m by 32.2m, and has a capacity of 37,900 metric tonnes. Their delivery will bring the OSC fleet up to 53 units by the beginning of 2017. JS



# Biggest car carriers on the Tyne

Höegh Trigger departing the Port of Tyne for Amsterdam on 13 January. KEN SHORT



## CAR CARRIER

The world's largest car carriers, Höegh Target and Höegh Trigger, have been regular callers on the Tyne since last summer. Höegh Target first called on 26 August 2015 during her maiden voyage, which took her from China, via Italy, France, Spain and the Netherlands, before she arrived on the Tyne for the first time. The two-

month voyage saw her call at a total of 30 different ports. Höegh Trigger, which was named at a ceremony at Xiamen Shipbuilding Industries in China and was delivered on 17 November 2015, has also called on the Tyne as part of her rotation.

The 76,400gt 14-deck vessels, which measure 194m by 36m and are 47m high, are the first two in a series of six vessels of the environmentally-

friendly New Horizon design which will be delivered during the next 18 months. They are the biggest vehicle carriers in the world, with 71,400m<sup>2</sup> of deck space, enabling them to carry up to 9,500 vehicles. They operate on the East Asia to Europe route.

The Port has invested in its facilities recent years, with construction work and dredging the Tyne and its berths to enable the largest ships to visit.

# Ship Canal

## DREDGING

An unusual visitor became a frequent sight on the Manchester Ship Canal during November and December 2015. The Netherlands-flagged motor hopper Deo Gloria (2,100dwt) was dredging material from the upper reaches of the Manchester Ship Canal to the Woolston Deposit grounds at Thelwall, Warrington, adjacent to the canal. The Woolston Eyes, which is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), aims to improve an existing nature reserve adjacent to Thelwall viaduct. Deo Gloria was built by Manche Industrie Marine in Dieppe, France in 1978 as Gansegrund and is operated by Productie Zeezund, Goes, Holland. RC



**ABOVE** The Netherlands-flagged motor hopper Deo Gloria in Irlam Lock, outbound on 4 December 2015 with dredged material. BRIAN COWBURN

# Aground on first visit

## COASTAL TANKER

Confusion reigned on 10 January when it was reported that the Italian-flagged coastal oil/chemical tanker Medkem Three had grounded on the river Ouse while she was on her way to the port of Goole. The vessel, having been renamed Nora under the Maltese flag, grounded near Faxfleet when she was on her way to Goole with a cargo of 2,500 tonnes of rapeseed oil from Erith in Kent.

The 3,746dwt Nora was built in 1997 at Ringkøbing, Denmark as levoli Star, and was renamed Medkem

Three in January 2015 when she was owned by Marnarvi Spa, of Napoli, Italy. She was bought by Fjord Shipping AS of Maaloy, Norway and placed under the Maltese flag in November 2015, when her name was changed to Nora.

There is some shoaling reported in the area where she grounded and, with the ship having a draught of 5.3m, there was little room for error by her captain on what was her first visit to the port. The 110m by 14m vessel refloated on the next high tide and proceeded to Goole, where she unloaded. RC



**ABOVE** The coastal tanker Nora, with 2,500 tonnes of rapeseed oil destined for Goole, is pictured aground in the river Ouse on 10 January. SIMON SMITH

# Braving the elements



**ABOVE** Shannon Fisher braves the elements as she leaves Aberdeen harbour in a heavy swell on 6 January after days of very heavy rain and wind. DAVID DODDS

## WEATHER

The New Year 2016 was marked by very severe weather and flooding all over the UK. Particularly badly hit was the port of Aberdeen, which was closed at times due to the heavy swell just outside the harbour entrance. After continuous rain and high winds for four days, the 5,420dwt oil products tanker Shannon Fisher decided to brave the elements and set sail. The tanker is operated on a regular service that links Immingham with Aberdeen,

Inverness, Scapa and Lerwick, and so often faces inclement weather.

Her captain has a certificate to sail into the near 3m swell at the piers, which was probably 5m further out. On 6 January, with only a blast of rain on a bitterly cold south easterly wind, she put out. Built by Damen at Bergum, Netherlands in 2006, and operated by Fisher Shipping Services of Barrow in Furness, the Bahamas-flagged vessel quite easily coped with the conditions, but the incident illustrates what our seafarers face in bad winters. RC

## BRIEF NEWS

**CUTTY SARK** • Plans are being made to build a seagoing replica of the tea clipper Cutty Sark. Vladimir Martus, a sailor and naval architect who was behind the successful project to build a replica of Peter the Great's flagship Shtandart, says the replica Cutty Sark will be a training vessel and living museum which will also carry symbolic cargoes of tea and wool like her namesake. Major business sponsors will be sought to fund the £19-24 million project, and Martus hopes to launch Cutty Sark 2 on 22 November 2019, the 150th anniversary of the original vessel.

**NAVY TUG** • Fire has destroyed the 73-year-old tug yacht William B, formerly the US Navy tug YTL-362, in Newport Beach, California. YTL-362 was built by Puget Sound Bridge and Dredge Co in Seattle and remained in naval service until 1961. She was then sold to Foss Tugs, renamed Roger Foss, and operated around Puget Sound until 1976, when she was sold again and became San Jacinto.

## Gladstone to open in Gladstone

Gladstone was three times granted Freedom of the City of Gladstone, in 1988, 2000, and 2007.



### PATROL BOAT

Hopes have been raised that the former Royal Australian Navy patrol boat Gladstone will open to the public this year in her new home at East Shores Parklands in her namesake city. Work carried out by volunteers to ready her for her new role as a museum ship has included cleaning, reconnecting electrics, painting her deck and superstructure, and building

an access walkway. Gladstone was built by North Queensland Engineers & Agents in Cairns in 1984 as the penultimate unit of the 15-strong Fremantle class.

She was based in Cairns for her entire naval career, and was employed in fisheries protection, immigration, customs and drug law enforcement operations. These sometimes took her as far as East Timor and the Solomon Islands, and during her 22½-year career

she sailed more than 618,000 miles. Affectionately known by many as 'Sadrock', she was decommissioned in her home base of Cairns on 13 March 2006 and the same day was gifted to the Gladstone Maritime History Society Inc.

However, plans to preserve her were then put on hold as a result of the global financial crisis, and she was stored in Gladstone Marina until November 2014, when work on her preservation resumed.

## Rain scare for Hornet



### AIRCRAFT CARRIER

Urgent repairs are being carried out to the Essex class aircraft carrier Hornet, which is preserved as a floating museum in Alameda, California. The teak flight deck of the 73-year-old ship has cracked over time and sprung multiple leaks, allowing water to seep through and corrode the steelwork below. 'On the days when we had big rainstorms last year, it leaked so much we had to shut down the ship,' said operations manager Scott Zirger.

Contractors are carrying out the \$800,000 project to spray a

polyaspartic weather sealant to the flight deck, which it is hoped will provide a temporary solution while long-term remedies are planned.

Hornet (CV-12) was built in Newport News, and her World War II service, which included the Battle of the Philippine Sea and the Battle of Leyte Gulf, earned her nine battle stars and a Presidential Unit Citation. She later served in both the Korean and Vietnam wars, and in 1958 was redesignated as an anti-submarine warfare support carrier (CVS-12). She was decommissioned and laid up in 1969 and stricken from the US Navy in 1989.

## End for historic Tuhoe

### SCHOONER

Little now remains of the historic auxiliary schooner Tuhoe, which ran aground in the mouth of the Waimakariri river, north of Christchurch, on 27 September 2015 (pictured). Damage to the 96-year-old vessel was such that it was deemed too dangerous to refloat her and she was broken up in situ.

The ship's steering wheel, wheelhouse, life buoys, one mast, photographs and other memorabilia were removed. It is hoped that

these can be displayed by the MV TuhoeKaipoi Riverton Trust, who have owned the ship since 2004.

Tuhoe was built as a trading schooner for the Northern Steamship Co by George Nicol in Auckland in 1919 and operated around the harbours and rivers of Northland and the Coromandel. During World War II she was taken over by the Royal New Zealand Navy but was then transferred to the US Army and commissioned as the small supply ship ATS-132, seeing service off the north-east coast of Australia.





## Museum acquires historic Fairmile



RML 497 was based in the Orkneys on anti-submarine training duties for a few months in early 1944.

### MOTOR LAUNCH

The future of RML 497, one of the few surviving World War II Fairmile B-type Motor Launches, has been secured. She will join the collection of historic large and small craft maintained by the National Museum of the Royal Navy, thanks largely to a £90,000 lottery hand-out supplemented by funds from the National Museum and the Coastal Forces Heritage Trust.

'RML 497 is an amazing survivor, full of original features and still fully operational, which is incredible for a wooden warship built for 'hostilities only' service during World War II,' said Nick Hewitt, head of heritage development at the museum.

RML 497 was built by Southampton Steam Joinery in 1942 as a Rescue Motor Launch, having an additional deckhouse aft to accommodate stretcher cases, and initially joined the

62nd ML Flotilla at Portland. From early 1944 she was based at Felixstowe with the 69th Flotilla and carried out patrols in the North Sea under Allied bomber routes to recover air crew from downed RAF and USAAF aircraft.

RML 497 was sold in 1946 and spent much of her post-war career as the passenger ferry Western Lady III operating services between Brixham and Torquay, and in 2013 was renamed The Fairmile.

## Mercur closed

### MINESWEEPER

HNLMs Mercur (A856), which has been moored in Scheveningen as a museum ship for more than 20 years, has been returned to the Royal Netherlands Navy and towed to Den Helder. The future for the wooden MSO-type ocean minesweeper is uncertain. Mercur was built in Wisconsin in 1954 and was transferred to the Netherlands as HNLMs Onverschrokken (M856). She was converted to a torpedo recovery vessel in 1971, renamed Mercur two years later, and remained in service until 1987. Plans to preserve her as a museum ship in Amsterdam fell through, and she was moved to Scheveningen in April 1993.



ABOVE Mercur in Scheveningen.

The only surviving US Navy Pegasus class patrol hydrofoil USS Aries (PHM-5).



## Aries flies to a new home

### PATROL HYDROFOIL

USS Aries (PHM-5), the only surviving US Navy Pegasus class patrol hydrofoil, has been moved from her long-term berth on Grand River at Brunswick, Missouri. Her new home, Gasconade shipyard in Gasconade, Missouri, 150 miles downstream, has been acquired by the USS Aries Hydrofoil Museum and provides a launching ramp as well as facilities to maintain, restore and display all the museum's exhibits.

A 110ft by 30ft deck barge will be used as a dock for Aries herself, and plans are in hand to restore Aries

to service so that she can sail under her own power to naval museums as a visiting exhibit, and participate in various waterfront festivities.

Aries, which was built by Boeing Marine Systems in Renton, Washington in 1982, is powered by two 1,600bhp diesels and a single 18,000shp General Electric gas turbine giving her a top speed of 48 knots. Her 11-year naval career was spent on training duties and border enforcement patrols in the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean. She was withdrawn from service in 1993 and transferred to the USS Aries Hydrofoil Museum three years later.

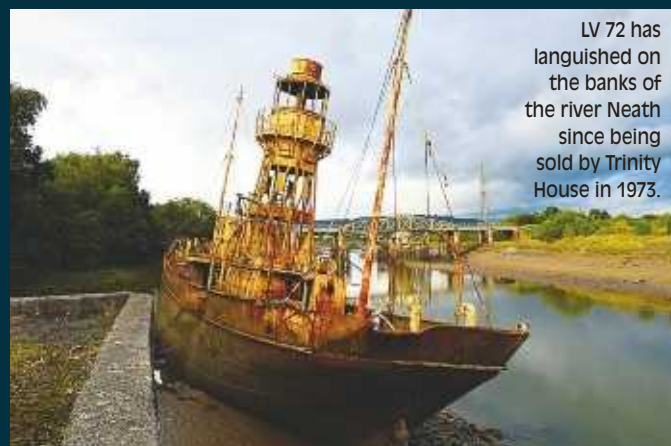
## Lightvessel campaign

### LV 72

A campaign has been launched to save a former Trinity House light vessel which played an important part in the D-Day landings. LV 72 was built by John Crown & Sons in Sunderland in 1903 and measured 116ft by 24ft. Her career until World War II was unremarkable, serving at a variety of Trinity House lightship stations.

However, the Allied invasion of Normandy in June 1944 saw the

iron-hulled vessel fulfilling a frontline role. She was named Juno and arrived in tow off Juno Beach on 18 June 1944 to light a safe route through a minefield, remaining on station until 27 January 1945. LV 72 subsequently resumed her Trinity House career, and was the oldest vessel in the Corporation's fleet when she was sold in 1973. However, she was not broken up, and now amateur historian Daniel Broom aims to restore the vessel and display it as a historic museum ship.



LV 72 has languished on the banks of the river Neath since being sold by Trinity House in 1973.

## Last trips looming for RMS St Helena



With St Helena's sea connection ending soon, Russell Plummer looks at the vessel which has provided the island's only link with the outside world since 1989 and which is known by islanders simply as 'RMS'.

### LINER SERVICE

After a successful first trial aircraft landing at the island's nearly completed airport, St Helena Line announced its passenger/cargo sea link with the remote British Overseas Protectorate in the South Atlantic will close in July. Until then, five-day sailings from Cape Town, some also going on to Ascension Island, by the 1989-built St Helena will continue as the only connection with one of the world's most remote spots.

There were a couple of annual sailings from England for many years, latterly from Portland, Dorset. A

final northbound voyage will leave St Helena on 24 May, reaching a still-to-be-confirmed UK port on 5 June and returning on the 243rd voyage of the ship's career via Tenerife and Ascension to reach St Helena on 3 July. The 156-berth vessel, with 55 officers and crew under contract with Bibby Line (Cayman Islands), will then make a return trip to Ascension before a last crossing to Cape Town, arriving on 15 July.

A Beechcraft King Air 200 aircraft, operated by TAB Charters and flying from Angola, landed in St Helena on 15 September 2015 and is conducting an extensive series of trials to calibrate landing, navigation and

communications equipment before the airport, financed by Britain at a cost of £240 million, becomes fully operational. From then on Comair will provide weekly flights from Johannesburg, connecting with international services worldwide.

For many years Union-Castle liners made occasional calls at St Helena during voyages to and from South Africa. After this ceased in 1977, the small Canadian passenger and cargo liner Northland Prince (1963/3,150gt), built in Vancouver and carrying 63 passengers, was bought to sail from Avonmouth as the first St Helena, with the service only interrupted in 1982,

when the vessel was requisitioned to serve as a Minesweeper Support Ship during the Falklands War.

This St Helena continued until she was replaced by the present purpose-built vessel, which came from A&P Appledore International at the former Hall, Russell Yard in Aberdeen, and which was the last ship to be built there.

Islanders, known as 'Saints', affectionately refer to St Helena simply as 'RMS', and she anchors in James Bay off Jamestown, with passengers and cargo being taken ashore by tender. She is one of just two vessels now holding 'Royal Mail Ship' status, the other being Cunard Line's flagship Queen Mary 2.

St Helena has a variety of cabins, ranging from tiny windowless cubicles on C Deck to more luxurious porthole accommodation on B Deck, and spacious rooms with windows on Deck A. There is a pleasant main lounge forward, with A Deck also offering a sun lounge, bar and sun deck aft, where a gymnasium and small outside swimming pool can be found.

With the foredeck utilised for containers stacked up to four high and which are handled by the ship's twin cranes, St Helena has carried almost every imaginable cargo to the island, from furniture and automotive parts to Christmas turkeys and sheep and goats, including wind turbines. St Helena even transported sailing yachts as deck cargo from Cape Town to compete in the Governor's Trophy event.

In November 1999 St Helena broke down during a southbound voyage and was forced into the French port of Brest, leaving many people stranded on the island with no way in or out. As islanders became concerned about the delivery of vital supplies and goods,

St Helena anchored in the island's James Bay using her own cranes to handle cargo.







**ABOVE** Lying at Avonmouth in 1990 after being replaced by the present vessel, the 1963-built St Helena was renamed St Helena Island.

the incident intensified calls for the provision of an airport.

A year later St Helena suffered a minor engine room fire in one of her twin six-cylinder Mirlees diesels while she was sailing from Cardiff to Tenerife on the first leg of her journey to the island, but there were no injuries or significant damage.

When there were October events for the 200th anniversary of Napoleon Bonaparte's arrival at the start of her second spell in exile, which lasted until his death in 1821, St Helena was en route to Cape Town. But the occasion was marked by a four-day visit from Royal Navy Type 23 frigate HMS Lancaster and Royal Fleet Auxiliary tanker Gold Rover, which was on a final deployment after 40 years of replenishing Royal Navy vessels around the world.

Her time at St Helena marked the completion of two-thirds of a nine-month commission for HMS Lancaster. Clyde-built in 1992, she had then travelled more than 24,000 miles, with 14 ports visited on four continents. With her crew wearing new style uniforms and the vessel being the first in the Royal Navy to carry a Wildcat helicopter, HMS Lancaster visited a further seven countries before she eventually returned to Plymouth.



**ABOVE** Containers being loaded in James Bay from waiting barges.



**ABOVE** Looking aft, St Helena's pool and sun deck.



**ABOVE** St Helena's funnel with crown symbol marking the vessel's 'Royal Mail Ship' status.

St Helena leaving Falmouth for the first time, having taken on stores, heading for Cardiff, October 1990, prior to making her maiden voyage on 15 November 1990. **JOHN BENNETT**



ST HELENA	
OPERATOR	St Helena Line – Andrew Weir Group
BUILT	1989, A&P Appledore International (Aberdeen)
DIMENSIONS	105m x 32m x 6m
TONNAGE	6,767gt, 310 net
MAIN ENGINES	2 x Mirlees 6K Major diesels (6,532kW)
PROPELLERS	Twin controllable pitch propellers
SPEED	16.5 knots (trials), 15 knots (service)
CAPACITY	156 passengers with 56 officers and crew
CARGO	1,800 tonnes
FLAG	UK (reg. London)



## USS NEW JERSEY

The US Navy's most decorated battleship, now on display at Camden New Jersey.

## PROFILE: SCOTLINE



Profile of Scotline, the shortsea operator which started carrying logs from Inverness to Varberg in 1979 and which today has a small fleet of specialised coasters.

## A CRUISE AROUND THE BRITISH ISLES



Taking a cruise around the British Isles has become increasingly popular and David Brown's trip on Royal Princess provided a fine opportunity to see Britain and Ireland's maritime shipping scene.

**PLUS DAZZLE CAMOFLAGE** • Dene Bebbington explains how an artist helped to reduce shipping losses during World War I.

**LIVERPOOL PILOTS** • In July the Liverpool pilots will be celebrating the 250th anniversary of the foundation of the Liverpool pilotage service.

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# ROYAL PRINCESS

## A groundbreaking ship

Royal Princess joins the Pacific Princess in the Princess Cruises fleet.



**O**n a dull, damp day at the end of October 1984, P&O Princess Cruises took delivery of the 45,000gt, 1,260-passenger cruise ship *Royal Princess* from the Wärtsilä Helsinki Shipyard in Finland, where she was built, and she sailed for Southampton. It was two years and eight-and-a-half months after the signing of the contract between P&O and Wärtsilä on 15 February 1982 by the time the ship set off.

In accordance with Finnish maritime tradition, on 12 May 1983 a British one pound coin, together with one coin of every value in the Finnish currency, was placed in the building dock before the keel was laid and construction officially began.

*Royal Princess* was built by the modern method of building in prefabricated sections. This involved preparing the steel and assembling it in sections, which are then blasted clean and painted before being transported to the dry building dock to form

the whole ship. On completion of the steelwork, the ship is floated out and taken to the fitting-out berth for the final stages of the work.

For *Royal Princess* 200 units were prefabricated and transported to the building dock. Wärtsilä's building dock was enclosed in a huge shed capable of housing a ship 240m in length. The 300-ton sections were fitted out with much of their pipework and machinery put in place before they were joined together. Even the bathrooms were

manufactured on a production line before being brought to the yard for installation.

In February 1984, ten months after the first section was laid, *Royal Princess* was ready to be floated out of the building shed. She was towed to the fitting-out complex, where she spent the next eight months. During this period many of the most complicated aspects of building a cruise ship were carried out and completed, including the sea trials. At this fitting-out stage the ship's operational officers were assembled to prepare their ship to enter service.

### Preparing for cruising

The officers had three separate offices in P&O's technical building in Southampton. Senior Engineer officers had been involved since the keel-laying and main engine building. The deck officers and the hotel officers arrived seven months before delivery. The deck officers' first task was to establish a relationship with the UK Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) surveyors, as the ship was to be registered in the UK. The priority was to prepare an emergency muster list



Royal Princess departing  
Southampton. MARITIME  
PHOTOGRAPHIC



David Brown describes the design and building process for P&O Princess Cruises' 1,260-passenger cruise ship *Royal Princess*, delivered in October 1984 from the Wärtsilä Helsinki Shipyard.

acceptable to the Department and, once this was accepted, to then lay out a plan to train over 500 crew and their reliefs.

In order to do this, the ship's plans were closely scrutinised and visits made to the ship to see the layout. The hotel officers had to organise the hotel staff, numerically the largest department in the ship, so that they could provide the service expected by the future passengers. They also had the task of arranging the berthing for the whole crew, apart from the four stripe officers, whose accommodation was already designated. The Deputy Purser in charge of this task chose for himself the largest of the senior officers' cabins. Unwittingly, not being a technical person, his cabin of choice was above the bow thrusters, so he and his successors lived with the extra noise for nearly three decades.

*Royal Princess* was built primarily for the US market and two additional government agencies were involved: the US Coast Guard, who check the safety plans of all ships embarking passengers in US ports, and the US Public Health Service, which checks



**ABOVE** *Royal Princess* at full speed making a hard turn to starboard on a voyage from the Helsinki shipyard to Southampton.

galley and service equipment. Both Agencies were invited by the builders to inspect the ship in the yard, so that any required alterations could be addressed before inspection at the first US port. The designated ship's officers accompanied them during these inspections.

As the fitting-out progressed, the officers became increasingly involved as more equipment, such as lifeboats and other safety systems, was fitted. The deck

officers were present for the lifeboat drop tests and drove the twin-screw tenders. Engineer officers were present for the technical equipment checks. Hotel officers checked galley and bar equipment.

Then came the training. The technical officers underwent extensive training programmes set up by the manufacturers and suppliers in the UK, Europe and also in the builder's yard. The senior deck officers spent a week at the Danish Ship Research



**ABOVE** Sun deck midships completed. The raised area, for additional deck loungers, is the housing for the ship's elevator machinery.



**ABOVE** The lido deck, the main pool area, after completion.

Laboratory near Copenhagen. Here they practised handling the controls and manoeuvring the ship on their simulator, on which the ship's propulsion and physical design characteristics, together with information on selected ports and weather conditions, were programmed.

The simulator training was hosted by Knud E. Hansen, the naval architects, and during this visit their renowned hydrodynamic naval architect Herr Rasmussen stated *Royal Princess* would achieve 23.3 knots on her trials. All the deck officers spent a week at the Kelvin Hughes simulators, becoming familiar with the radars being fitted in the ship. Crew training continued in the months leading to delivery, until all the crew of nearly 600 and their reliefs were ready to operate the ship on her delivery.

### ROYAL PRINCESS

<b>LAUNCHED</b>	18.2.1984, christened 15.11.1984, maiden voyage 19.11.1984
<b>BUILT</b>	Wärtsilä Helsinki Shipyard, Finland, yard no.464
<b>DIMENSIONS</b>	230.61m x 29.6m x 7.8m
<b>TONNAGE</b>	44,348gt, 5,580dwt
<b>MAIN ENGINES</b>	4 x Wärtsilä 12V32, combined 27,840kW
<b>SPEED</b>	22 knots
<b>CAPACITY</b>	8 passenger decks, 1,260 passengers, 537 crew
<b>LATER NAMES</b>	2005–2011: Artemis Since 2011: Artania





**ABOVE** Royal Princess departing Wärtsilä Shipyard, Helsinki, with the men and women who built the ship watching and waving farewell.



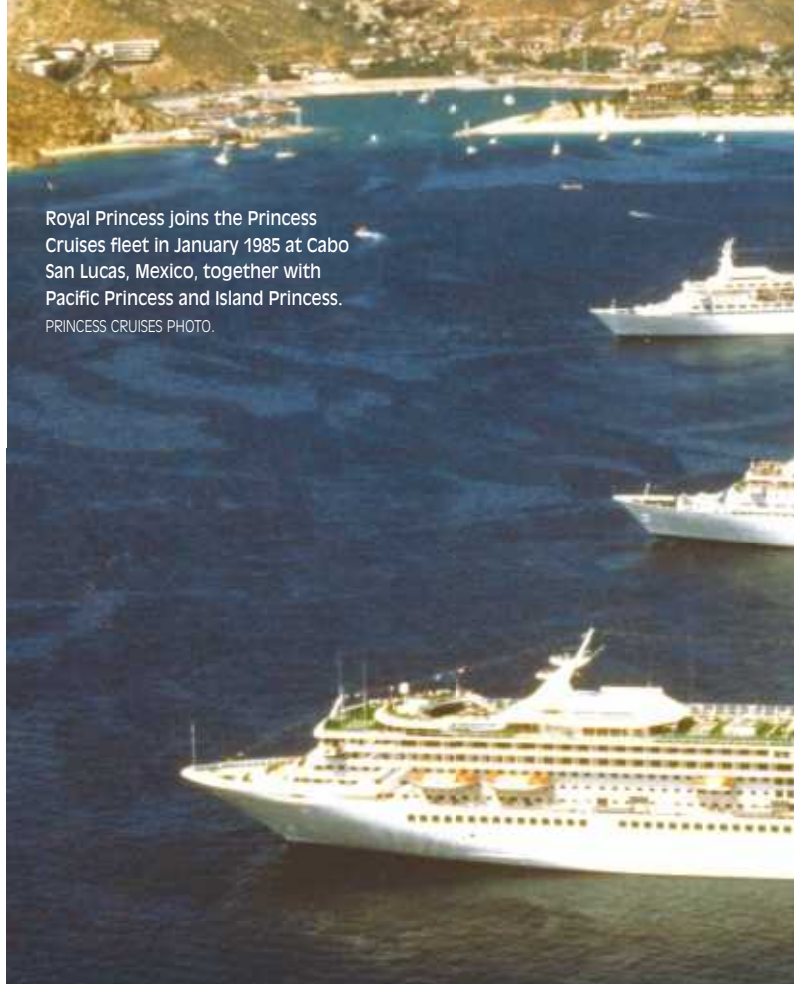
**ABOVE** Full speed run on sea trials in the Gulf of Finland. Teak decks are still being laid and rails are uncapped.



**ABOVE** The navigating bridge of the 1981-built Silja Line Baltic ferry Finlandia. This was different from the more traditional bridge on Royal Princess.



**ABOVE** The 1966-built ferry Fennia, berthed in the Wärtsilä shipyard, was used as an accommodation ship for the ship's crew during the construction process.



Royal Princess joins the Princess Cruises fleet in January 1985 at Cabo San Lucas, Mexico, together with Pacific Princess and Island Princess.  
PRINCESS CRUISES PHOTO.

Before being delivered to P&O Princess, *Royal Princess* was put through her paces in two sea trials, the first in June and the second in September. At these trials, builders and owners got the feel of the vessel, all equipment was tried and proved, adjustments made and manoeuvring tests completed. Vibration and acoustic checks were carried out in all areas of the ship at both full speed and when manoeuvring.

During these sea trials naval architect Rasmussen's prediction of speed was confirmed, to the tenth of a knot. The days at sea on trials did not slow down the fitting-out process. Teak was laid on the open decks; teak cappings were fitted on rails; outside metal decks were prepared for AstroTurf to be glued; and, internally, carpets were laid and cabin interiors assembled.

While they were impressed with the ship as a whole, one disappointment for some navigating officers was the navigating bridge. It had the most up-to-date navigational equipment, but in comparison to the layout of the latest Baltic cruise ferries had something of a 1960s look. The layout was to a P&O design.

The ship was also certificated for Unattended Machinery

Space operation. To acquire this certification, in addition to having SOLAS-mandated equipment, a test was required which involved manoeuvring the ship for a specific number of hours from the navigating bridge with no action from the Engine Control Room (ECR). While this test was carried out, during the trials the ECR was monitored by technical personnel. It is worth noting that, in all her years in P&O Princess Cruises' service, the ship never operated with an unmanned machinery space.

### Ready for service

The day finally arrived for P&O to take over the ship, and the crew went aboard. The previous ten days had seen them living on the chartered 1966-built ferry *Fennia*, berthed in the Wärtsilä shipyard near *Royal Princess*. The run from Helsinki to Southampton on their new ship provided the first opportunity for the crew to familiarise themselves with the ship in operation, and in a few short days *Royal Princess* arrived in Southampton and joined the P&O fleet, berthing with *Canberra*.


The final act in the whole process was the naming ceremony, which took place on 15 November 1984, with





the honours being undertaken by Diana, Princess of Wales. *Royal Princess* sailed a few days later to Miami, starting her first cruise with fare-paying passengers, although numbers were purposely limited to 800.

It was not a smooth crossing, as the ship encountered three

low pressure systems, and she arrived in Miami a day late. In the US she joined the Princess Cruises fleet, and thus *Royal Princess*, a ship of many firsts, designed to take P&O Princess Cruises into the 21st century, began her illustrious 27-year service with the company. 



**ABOVE** The author in the Captain's not-yet-completed accommodation.



**ABOVE** Full speed, hard over test to port, checking the ship's heel during the ship's trial.



**ABOVE** The after end of the completed Lido Deck looking forward.



**ABOVE** Wärtsilä Shipyard's Trials Master and assistant fitting the magnetic compass.



**ABOVE** Looking forward on the completed starboard Promenade deck, ready for passengers.

**BELOW** *Royal Princess* cruising through the Panama Canal, showing her pristine upper decks. PRINCESS CRUISES PHOTO





# HOLLAND ON PATROL

**Conrad Waters looks at the Royal Netherlands Navy's Holland class ships, the 'Rolls-Royce' of Offshore Patrol Vessels.**

**T**he end of the Cold War a quarter of a century ago had a major impact on many European navies, most of which had been configured to combat potential Soviet aggression – to hunt submarines in the North Atlantic, sweep mines from the entrances to major ports, or resist amphibious landings in the Baltic and Norway. The elimination of these threats almost overnight meant that these fleets needed a new role.

As it happened, the collapse of the bi-polar world order, maintained by the stand-off between NATO and the Warsaw Pact, brought increased instability and new requirements for naval forces, with new threats from piracy, terrorism or disorder in 'failed states' rather than the actions of a hostile naval power. The expansion of maritime borders, and the growing

economic importance of assets such as fisheries and offshore oil and gas fields, also meant there was a need to police territorial waters more effectively.

A major problem posed by this changed environment was that many of the warships designed during the Cold War were not well suited for new responsibilities. For example, an expensive anti-submarine frigate was, perhaps, not the best ship to use chasing pirates off the

Horn of Africa. As a result, fleets had to be restructured to meet new missions.

One of the most adventurous in this regard was the Royal Netherlands Navy, which acquired a new class of large and highly sophisticated patrol vessels, the Holland class, for long-distance policing missions. The aim was to produce a warship that, while not intended for high-intensity combat, had capabilities ideal for a maritime policing role.

## **Holland class origins**

The Holland class traces its origins to a 2005 Naval Study that aimed to achieve the optimum structure for the future Dutch fleet. The Royal Netherlands Navy had already shrunk significantly since the end of the Cold War. However, the ten frigates that formed the core of the surface fleet were not particularly suitable for the constabulary and stabilisation missions the navy

**HNLMS Holland (P840) at sea. The class are superbly equipped for their primary constabulary and stabilisation missions in lower threat environments. THALES NEDERLAND**







**ABOVE** The Royal Netherlands Navy decided to restructure its navy so that there were fewer frigates like Tromp (left) and more ships to support stabilisation missions, like the new joint support ship Karel Doorman (right). The Holland class were developed as part of this restructuring. ROYAL NETHERLANDS NAVY



**ABOVE** The offshore patrol vessel Holland on trials in the North Sea in December 2011. The four Holland class ships patrol the Dutch Exclusive Economic Zone, as well as the seas off the Dutch territories in the Caribbean. THALES NEDERLAND



**ABOVE** The lead Holland class offshore patrol vessel operating in the Caribbean with the US Coast Guard in June 2013, during which a cocaine shipment with an estimate value of US\$24 million was seized. The Holland class were designed to carry out long-range policing missions. US NAVY

was increasingly required to perform, so it was decided to sell four of these ships.

The resulting savings helped to fund the acquisition of a new joint support ship, which could undertake amphibious operations in littoral waters, as well as four new patrol vessels. The new 'patrouilleschepen' would be particularly well-suited for patrolling the Dutch Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) in the North Sea and the Caribbean. They would also be used to support international peace-keeping missions.

The new ships were unlike any warships previously operated by the Royal Netherlands Navy and required a new design approach. In addition to the core aim of creating a ship optimised for low-intensity naval operations, there was a desire to reduce operating costs. This resulted in many labour-saving devices to help minimise crew size. An important political aim was to support the Dutch marine sector by utilising innovative technologies developed in the Netherlands.

The resulting design has produced a large ship: full load displacement of 3,750 tons is around 500 tons more than the frigates the Holland class has replaced. This is partly a reflection of the use of civilian construction standards, as commercial vessels tend to use heavier grade steels. However, the need to cross the North Atlantic to operate in the Caribbean and to deploy globally on peace-keeping operations were also important considerations. The bridge and accommodation areas are positioned as far from the bow as possible to help operations in bad weather, while an internal slipway under the helicopter deck allows boats to be launched and recovered in conditions up to sea state five. The flight deck and hangar are large enough to handle the NH-90 medium-sized helicopters currently entering Dutch service. There is a large crane capable of handling standard containers, for which dedicated spaces are provided.

*Holland* and her sisterships can be operated by a core crew of just 50 sailors. However, living quarters are provided

for a further 40 specialists, such as a Special Forces team or a helicopter detachment. In addition, possible use in disaster recovery or other humanitarian operations is catered for by provision of temporary accommodation for up to 100 evacuees. The standard of the permanent cabins is very high, with most crew housed in spacious two-berth units. In contrast to previous Dutch warships, officers and crew share the same dining facilities, although separate recreational areas are provided. The combination of a relatively large ship with a small crew gives the ships a very spacious feel.

The minimal crewing does, however, mean that there are fewer personnel than on a traditional warship to carry out essential functions. This has been counterbalanced by the use of considerable automation, including a sophisticated platform management system that includes use of handheld personal digital assistants (PDAs) to advise relevant crew of potential problems when off duty. The bridge is capable of one-person operation, although the navy typically maintains two sailors on duty.

The propulsion system is a combined diesel or electric arrangement. Two MAN diesels linked to a Renk gearbox provide the main means of propulsion through twin shafts. However, a secondary power take-in arrangement – under which two ABB electrical motors powered by the ship's electrical system are connected to the gearboxes – provides more efficient low-speed operation. This is particularly helpful if a ship is, for example, loitering in a patrol area. Overall range is in excess of 5,000 nautical miles at 15 knots, while a maximum speed of 22 knots has been achieved on trials.

In line with their non-warfighting role, the Holland class ships are equipped with only a modest armament. The Italian company Oto Melara has provided the bulk of the weapons systems. These comprise a 76mm Oto Melara Compact gun in 'A' position, a 30mm Oto Melara Marlin immediately forward of the bridge, and two 12.7mm Oto Melara Hitrole machine guns,

the latter arranged so as to give near 360-degree coverage.

The ability to embark a helicopter provides considerable additional flexibility, while there are two RHIBs for search and boarding operations. Blast-resistant bulkheads and physical armour provide protection against threats such as attack by lightly-armed pirates. However, there is no provision for the expensive shock resistant features and multiple damage control zones found on frontline warships.

In contrast to the light armament, the provision of sensors is comprehensive. These are largely housed in one of the most visually prominent features – the pyramid-like Thales integrated mast or I-Mast, located immediately aft the bridge. The I-Mast is a separate, air-tight module that incorporates all the ship's major radars, other surveillance systems and communications equipment. It is fabricated separately to the

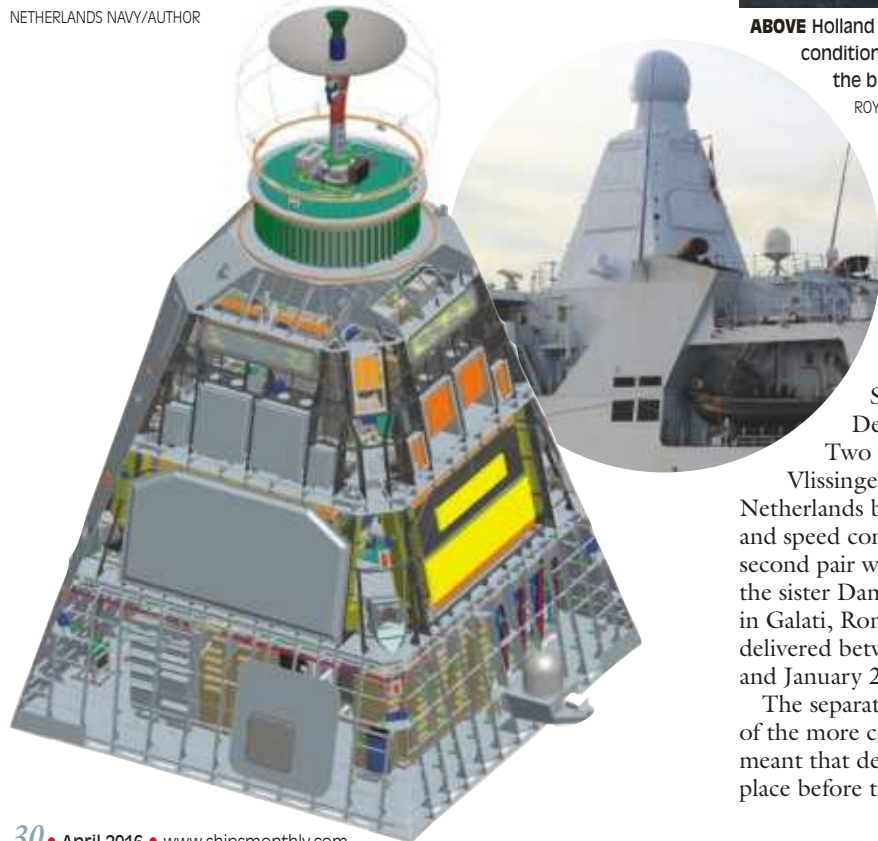
rest of the ship and simply bolted on when complete. Important advantages claimed for the structure are the avoidance of interference between sensors, more efficient manufacture, and much easier maintenance. Sensitive electronic equipment is not left exposed to the elements in the same way as it is on a conventional mast.

The sensors installed in the I-Mast include Thales' SMILE volume surveillance radar for medium-range searches out to 250km, and the SEASTAR surface-search radar used to detect small surface objects at shorter ranges. The latter, for example, could be used to detect a small boat or – even – a swimmer. Both are fixed four-faced arrays similar to the US Navy's SPY-1 radar associated with its Aegis system, using software-controlled beams to carry out a range of searches.

There is also a Gatekeeper electro-optical surveillance system that utilises infrared and colour TV cameras to supplement the radars. The mast also houses an integrated communications system and an identification friend or foe (IFF) antenna. The overall combination provides a more effective surveillance capability than that found in many

**BELOW** The Thales IM-400 integrated mast is a dominant feature of the Holland class. A satellite communications antenna is housed in a dome at the head of the mast, with a cylindrical IFF array below. Radar arrays and transmitting/receiving panels for communications are mounted flush with the mast's sides. The external view (right) shows the Integrated mast on *Friesland*. ROYAL

NETHERLANDS NAVY/AUTHOR



**ABOVE** Holland off the Dutch coast in 2012. An emphasis on good seakeeping in conditions found in the North Atlantic is reflected in the positioning of the bridge and accommodation areas towards the middle of the ship.

ROYAL NETHERLANDS NAVY

frontline frigates.

The four ships in the Holland class were ordered from Dutch-based Damen Schelde Naval Shipbuilding in December 2007.

Two were built at the Vlissingen yard in the Netherlands but, to save costs and speed completion, the second pair was assembled at the sister Damen group yard in Galati, Romania. All were delivered between May 2011 and January 2013.

The separate construction of the more complex I-Masts meant that delivery took place before the masts were

installed. This necessitated

a return to the facility at Vlissingen to complete the relatively straightforward integration process. The third ship, HNLMS *Friesland*, was actually commissioned before her mast was installed.

## Operational Service

Although the lead ship, HNLMS *Holland*, has been in commission for less than four years, the four ships of the class are already proving their worth. Following commissioning, they first completed lengthy work-up periods specifically tailored to their intended role. These included training with the British Flag Officer Sea Training (FOST) organisation at Devonport.





## HOLLAND CLASS OPVS

<b>SHIPS</b>	Holland (P840) (commissioned 6.7.2012), Zeeland (P841) (23.8.2013), Friesland (P842) (22.1.2013), Groningen (P843) (29.11.2013)
<b>BUILDERS</b>	Damen Schelde Naval Shipbuilding: Vlissingen (P840, P841); Galati (P842, P843)
<b>DISPLACEMENT</b>	3,750 tons full load
<b>DIMENSIONS</b>	108.4m x 16.0m x 4.6m
<b>ARMAMENT</b>	1 x 76mm Oto Melara Compact, 1 x 30mm Oto Melara Marlin, 2 x 12.7mm Oto Melara Hitrole machine guns, hangar and flight deck for 1 x medium-sized helicopter
<b>PROTECTION</b>	Blast resistant bulkheads; armour of key areas against small calibre weapons & rocket-propelled grenades
<b>SENSORS</b>	Thales IM-400 integrated mast housing radar and IR/TV sensors. Navigation radar
<b>PROPULSION</b>	Combined diesel or electric (CODOE), 2 x MAN 12V28/33 diesels, 2 x ABB electric motors & 1 x ABB bow thruster
<b>SPEED</b>	22 knots; range 5,000 nautical miles at 15 knots
<b>COMPLEMENT</b>	Core crew of 50; permanent accommodation for 40 more personnel; austere accommodation for up to 100 evacuees

**LEFT** The Holland class offshore patrol vessels Zeeland and Groningen with other Dutch constabulary assets in the Caribbean for a photographic exercise. Each of the four Holland class ships has already served as the local Dutch guard ship for the country's territories in the region. ROYAL NETHERLANDS NAVY



**ABOVE** The Holland class are designed to undertake boarding operations in poor weather, with an internal slipway under the flight deck allowing small boats to be safely launched and recovered. ROYAL NETHERLANDS NAVY



**ABOVE** The fourth and final Holland class ship, HNLMS Groningen, berthed at the Dutch naval base at Den Helder in June 2015. AUTHOR



**ABOVE** Holland on trials. Ships of the class were unlike any previous warships operated by the Royal Netherlands Navy. THALES NEDERLAND

Subsequent operational use has encompassed the normal round of national and NATO exercises, as well as the guardship duties in the Dutch Caribbean territories. The effectiveness of their design has already been demonstrated by a number of successful rescue missions and narcotics interceptions in the region.

Perhaps a sterner test of the class's abilities has been the inaugural deployment of the fourth and final member of the class, HNLMS *Groningen*, on the European Union's anti-piracy mission, Operation

Atalanta, off the Horn of Africa. The three-month mission between September and November 2015 saw the ship conducting a number of anti-piracy patrols and training with Seychelles maritime forces. A notable role was the provision of protection to the United Nations-chartered vessel *Kestrel*, which has been involved in bolstering the local economy by installing fish aggregating devices off Somalia's coast.

The Holland class represents a very interesting warship design concept resulting from

the Royal Netherlands Navy's decision, as a result of the 2005 Naval Study, to focus part of its relatively small fleet on second-line policing duties.

The resulting ships are, arguably, the best-equipped vessels that could be devised for this role. Some critics have countered that they are expensive and inflexible given their unsuitability for higher threat environments. However, this rather misses the point of the initial intention, and the Holland class is, quite simply, the Rolls-Royce of current offshore patrol vessels. **NI**



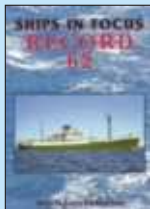
Friesland seem departing Portsmouth Harbour in November 2014. The ships have been kept busy in support of national, NATO and European Union tasking since completion. AUTHOR

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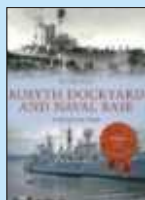
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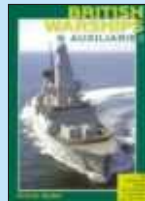
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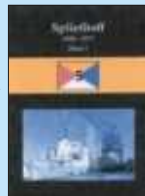
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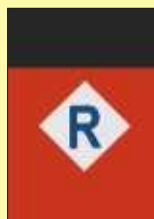
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# Nordstjernen

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## Diamond anniversary for liner that harks back to another era

2016 marks the 60th anniversary for Nordstjernen, the still active former Hurtigruten liner, which has enjoyed a fine career, as Peter Knego recalls.

An icy chill nipped our cheeks as the Polarcirkel craft sped towards the snow-covered shores of Spitsbergen's Liedefjorden. As fellow travellers anticipated their first zodiac-style landing since departing the port of Longyearbyen the previous afternoon, I gazed back in awe at the wondrous, black-hulled ship that brought us to such a remote, glacial place.

For any maritime enthusiast, *Nordstjernen* is a dreamy apparition; from her long, graceful bow to her low superstructure, well-proportioned funnel, towering masts and cruiser spoon stern, she beckons from another time.

For the next two days, *Nordstjernen* would ply the deep fjords and rocky coastline of Spitsbergen, Svalbard's largest island. In the perpetual sunlight, her fresh paint and

newly varnished decks glistened in a series of ever-changing, spectacular backdrops.

Life on board this quaint but unique little liner harks back to what sea travel was once like. When not off on landings to explore one of Earth's remote regions, her guests would content themselves with gazing at the passing scenery, reading, conversing with other like-minded cruisers and, perhaps, playing a game of cards.

Remarkably, in addition to the fact that *Nordstjernen* is without a pool, spa and gimmick-laden attractions, she lacks some of the most basic features taken for granted in modern sea travel, such as stabilisers, air-conditioning and private facilities in every cabin. Fortunately, even without such attributes, *Nordstjernen* fills a void for those who prefer cruising the old-fashioned way. In 2016, when she celebrates her 60th birthday,

Nordstjernen was completed by the Blohm + Voss shipyard in 1956. PHOTO COURTESY OF HURTIGRUTEN



Nordstjernen in an early Bergen Line postcard view. PETER KNEGO COLLECTION.



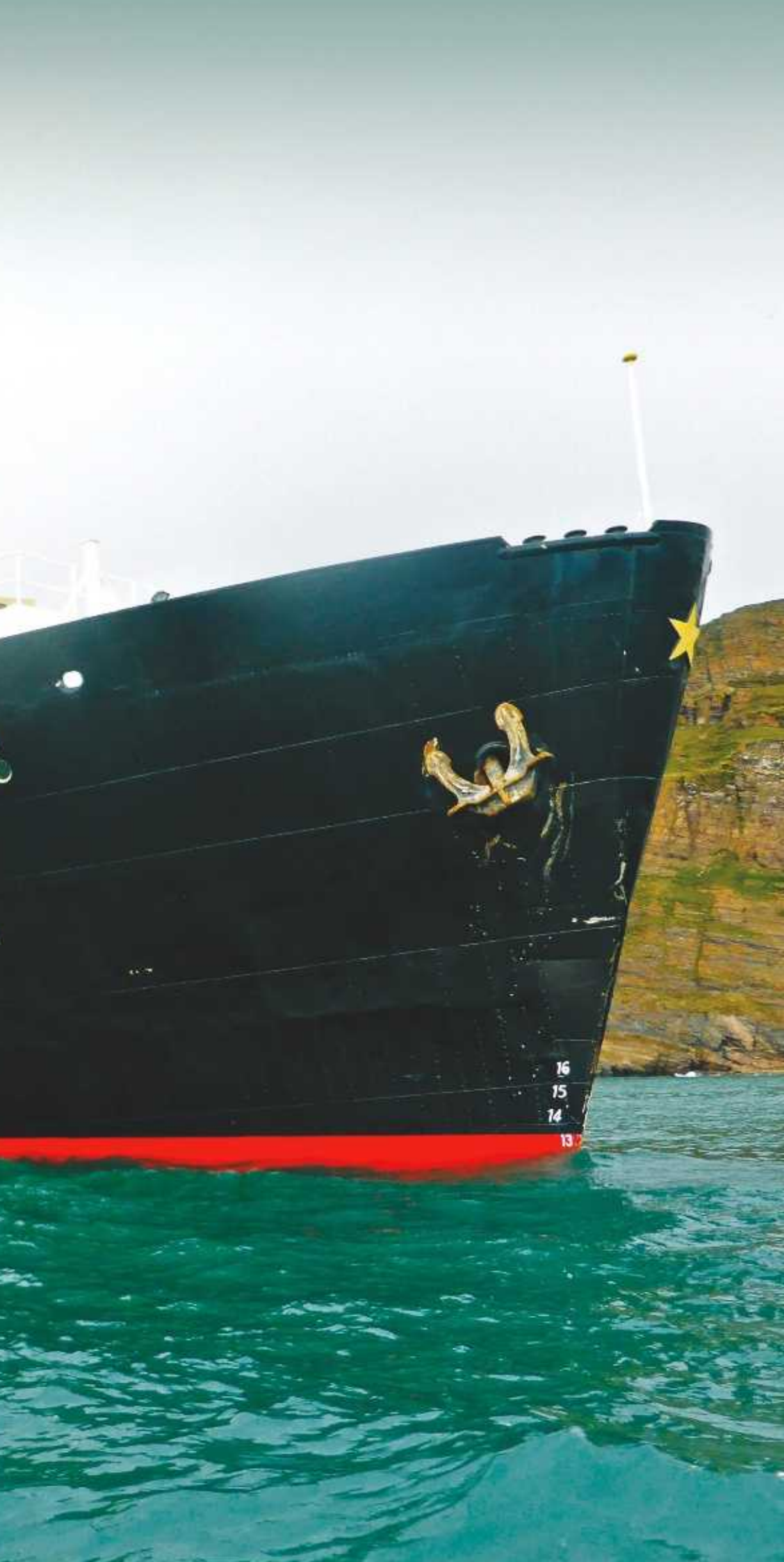
In the summer of 2016 the classic Nordstjernen will be cruising in Spitsbergen under charter to former owners Hurtigruten. ALL PHOTOS BY PETER KNEGO UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED





**NORDSTJERNEN**





## NORDSTJERNEN

<b>BUILT</b>	1956, Blohm + Voss, Hamburg (hull 767)
<b>DIMENSIONS</b>	264ft 11in x 41ft 4in x 14ft 9in
<b>TONNAGE</b>	2,191gt
<b>PASSENGERS</b>	Original: 450 passengers (192 in first and tourist class cabins); current: 292 on coastal service, 150 cruising service
<b>CREW</b>	27
<b>MACHINERY</b>	Original: B&W diesel, single screw Current: MaK diesel, single screw
<b>SPEED</b>	15.5 knots



**ABOVE** Nordstjernen's tripod mast.



**ABOVE** Nordstjernen at Longyearbyen.

## TIMELINE

<b>1954</b>	Ordered by Bergen Line
<b>1956</b>	Completed by Blohm + Voss, Hamburg
<b>1979</b>	Sold to Troms Fylkes
<b>1983</b>	Renovated and re-engined
<b>2006</b>	Transferred to Hurtigruten Group
<b>2012</b>	Sold to Vestland Classic and given NOK 2.5 million refit
<b>2012</b>	Given 'protected' status by Norwegian Directorate for Cultural Heritage
<b>2016</b>	Celebrating 60th year of service

she will enjoy a busy diamond anniversary full of charters, including another season of cruising in Spitsbergen for her former owners Hurtigruten.

### A historic service

In 1954 Bergen Steamship Company (Det Bergenske Dampskibsselskab) placed the order for a new ship at Hamburg's Blohm + Voss shipyard. Founded in 1851, the Company had established a North Sea ferry operation and worldwide cargo services, and gave us one of the first purpose-built cruise ships, the yacht-like *Stella Polaris* of 1927.

*Nordstjernen* (meaning 'North Star') would be part of the Norwegian state-sponsored Hurtigruten ('Express Route') fleet, comprised of ships owned by four companies, that, in addition to Bergen, included Tromsø-based Troms Fylkes, Narvik-based Ofotens Dampskibsselskab and Stokmarknes-based Vesteraalens Dampskibsselskab. The ships provided daily departures from Bergen to a northern terminus at Kirkenes, linking up to 40 ports on an 11-night, 2,500-mile round-trip voyage.

Like her fleetmates, *Nordstjernen* made multiple stops, day and night, some lasting only the few minutes needed to quickly exchange passengers, mail and cargo, before heading to the next port. For most of her patrons, she provided an essential means of transport between ports that

were only accessible by sea.

Completed in 1956, she was basically a modified version of Bergen's *Nordlys* and *Polarlys* of 1951-2, both of which were evolutions of similar, pre-war vessels. Slightly slower than her fleetmates, the 2,191gt *Nordstjernen* was originally powered by a B&W diesel that drove her variable pitch single screw at a service speed of 15.5 knots.

She carried up to 450 passengers, 192 in both first and tourist class cabins, many of which were interchangeable. A working class liner, she had an ice-strengthened bow and an aluminium superstructure that, due to its lightweight construction, helped compensate for her lack of stabilisers.

The ship's long foredeck concealed two cargo holds that

were loaded and unloaded with a modern crane, rather than via traditional masts and booms. On northbound voyages, she tended to carry cars, construction materials and food supplies, and on the southbound voyages fish was primarily the cargo.

In 1979, when Bergen Line sold its Hurtigruten division to Troms Fylkes, *Nordstjernen's* funnel livery changed from Bergen's black-with-three-stripes to Troms Fylkes' black, white and red. In 1983 she was re-engined with a more powerful MaK diesel and, over the years, her accommodation was partially modernised with the addition of private facilities in more cabins.

During the 1990s most of the surviving traditional Hurtigruten vessels were

replaced with much larger, more modern ships, although the popular *Nordstjernen* soldiered on, diverting to Svalbard cruising in the summertime. In 2006 *Nordstjernen* changed liveries again when the last two independent companies, OVDS (Ofotens and Vesteraalens, which had previously merged) and Troms Fylkes merged to form the current Hurtigruten Group. Further renovations to the ship, including the addition of the Polarcirkel landing craft, have been ongoing ever since.

It is unlikely any ship will ever beat her Hurtigruten service record of 56 years, which came to a close in 2012, when she was sold to her current owners, Bergen-based Vestland Classic. After a 2.5 million Norwegian Kroner refit at Gdansk, Poland, the ship was given protected status by the Norwegian Directorate For Cultural Heritage.

### Cruising service

She emerged from the shipyard with her hull and superstructure repainted, her teak decking and caprails completely restored, new wiring (including the addition of wi-fi in some public spaces) and an overhaul of her machinery. Once again sporting her original Bergen Line livery, the ship now alternates between service as a floating hotel and charter cruising.

*Nordstjernen's* target demographic is elderly but active and well-to-do passengers, primarily hailing from Germany and Norway, with a sprinkling of Brits, Australians, Canadians and the occasional American. Without an elevator and specially-equipped cabins, she is not recommended for disabled travellers.

After an adventure-filled three nights exploring the remote beauty of Spitsbergen, I disembarked *Nordstjernen* in Longyearbyen on a cloudy morning. Several hours later, as the sun made a cameo appearance, I returned to witness this enduring liner sail off with a new complement of passengers into the neighbouring Isfjord. Unlike most ships of her era, *Nordstjernen* is still very much alive and relevant on the eve of her seventh decade of uninterrupted service. **SM**

• Special thanks to Anthony Cooke.



*Nordstjernen* calls at remote anchorages on her Spitsbergen itineraries.



*Nordstjernen* calls at the Ukrainian/Russian mining town of Barentsburg in Spitsbergen.



Nordstjernen departs Longyearbyen on Tuesdays and Fridays on her summertime sailings from Spitsbergen.



## Deck by deck • On board Nordstjernen



**ABOVE** Nordstjernen's wheelhouse is open for visitors when conditions permit.



**ABOVE** Installed in 1983, Nordstjernen's MaK diesel drives her single screw.



**ABOVE** The fantail on aft Lounge Deck features beautifully restored teak decking.



**ABOVE** The traditionally appointed forward lounge is a comfortable space.

**N**ordstjernen has five passenger decks, including the uppermost Bridge Deck, which features open teak decks that stretch aft from the wheelhouse and officers' quarters to a terrace overlooking the stern. The interior of the next level, Lounge Deck, begins with the former first class lounge, the ship's most charmingly authentic 'period' space.

Used for functions such as the boat drill muster and nature talks, it features colourful Norwegian folk art carvings and a backlit ceiling recess, recalling the observation lounges of larger Scandinavian liners of the same era, such as Swedish American Line's Gripsholm and Norwegian America Line's Bergensfjord.

The Hall, which is directly aft of the Lounge, is where most guests embark, via small sheltered alcoves on either side of Lounge Deck. Situated at the top of the forward stairtower, which

is lined in teak panelling that features a 'merhorse' carving, it is another impressive vintage space.

In the Hall's aft portion, a staircase leads up to Bridge Deck and, on either side, doors open into the Restaurant, which is configured in two long galleries with picture windows. Vintage blue fish ceramics crown the inner bulkheads of the galleries, although the restaurant's furnishing and decking have been modernised. The room's main focal point is a wooden carving of a fishnet with blue ceramic sea life insets that make an ideal backdrop for the buffets, which feature more than a little sea food.

Directly aft of the Restaurant on the starboard side is the galley, which also serves the Cafe on the port side of the Restaurant. On regular cruise service, the Cafe is an annex with overflow seating to the Restaurant, but, in traditional Hurtigruten coastal service, it doubles as an all-hours coffee



**ABOVE** The largest staterooms are the former first class cabins.



**ABOVE** Guests enter the ship via the former first class Hall on Lounge Deck.

shop and snack bar. Even though the space has been largely modernised, it features a display of Bergen Line artefacts, crockery and silverware.


The former tourist class Lounge, which surrounds the aft stairtower, concludes the interior of Lounge Deck. Exquisite original carvings by Paul Rene Gauguin (a well-known Norwegian artist and the grandson of the famed Paul Gauguin), depicting the 'North Wind' and 'South Wind', line its forward bulkheads.

An open fantail area, with deck chairs and a beautifully maintained emergency steering stand on Lounge Deck, is probably the most popular place on the ship, especially on sunny days.

From the next lower level, Deck C, passenger access to the open fo'c'sle area on Lounge Deck is provided via staircases leading up from the sheltered promenades on either side. The narrow promenades continue aft from the base of the superstructure to the mooring area at the stern, and are a favourite spot for those who enjoy being close to the sea.

Deck C is devoted to accommodation, ranging from cosy former first class cabins with private facilities to interior cabins with facilities a few steps away. The indoor/outdoor reception area, which still has its original mailbox with slots for all of the Hurtigruten ports, is at the base of the forward stairtower on Deck C.

Deck B is mostly accommodation, as is the aft portion of Deck A, with its 'train compartment' style upper/lowers without facilities. Even Nordstjernen's largest cabins are small by today's standards, with many of their brass-framed portholes able to be opened to let in fresh air. The portholes also have metal deadlights, which are sealed in rough seas and also shut out the sun during the summer season.

Dining is also a far cry from mainstream cruise line fare, with buffet style breakfast and lunch and a set three-course, full-service dinner. Service is friendly and efficient and the food is basic, but altogether satisfactory, with an emphasis on fresh fish and sea food. 



**ABOVE** Nordstjernen's long fo'c'sle is accessible to passengers.



# Maritime Mosaic

*A collection of readers' own photographs*

When the royal family were regular visitors to Cowes Regatta, they stayed on the Royal Yacht Britannia and the Royal Navy provided guard ships. After Britannia was decommissioned in 1996, royal visitors would often be accommodated on Trinity House vessels. The navy is still present, usually sending a smaller vessel. Gordon Roberts' photos recall some of the ships attending the famous Regatta.



**TOP** THV Patricia is a coastal vessel which undertakes maintenance work and places new navigation markers around the UK. Built at Leith in Scotland in 1982, she is fitted out to a very high standard and remains in service today. An earlier Patricia took HRH Duke of Edinburgh on a tour of Scandinavia in 1952, replacing the old Royal Yacht Victoria and Albert III when she was deemed unseaworthy. She is seen in the Solent in August 2006.

**LEFT** ORP Heweliusz is a Polish Navy Projekt 874 hydrographic survey ship, and is pictured attending Cowes Week in August 2008. Launched in November 1981 and commissioned in November 1982, the 61.6m vessel is one of very few foreign visitors to have come to Cowes during Regatta Week.





**ABOVE** The Portsmouth-based Archer class coastal training craft HMS Dasher maintaining a naval presence at Cowes Week in August 2014. Built by Vosper Thornycroft in 1986, she became part of the Bristol University Royal Navy Unit.



**ABOVE RIGHT** THV Winston Churchill is another of Trinity House's coastal vessels built by Samuel White at Cowes. Built in 1963, she gave 26 years of service before being laid up and eventually sold and converted to a yacht, and is pictured in the Solent off Cowes in 1988.

**RIGHT** The lighthouse/buoy tender THV Galatea is the second Trinity House ship to carry the name. Built at Gdansk in Poland in 2007, she is fitted out to a high standard and is capable of accommodating 40 passengers. She is a regular visitor to Cowes Week, and in 2014 played host to members of the Royal family, hence the Royal Standard being flown on the bow.



**BELOW** The Royal family, on board Britannia, were regular visitors to Cowes Week, usually staying for the first four or five days before departing for Scotland. Britannia was commissioned in 1954, and made her last visit to Cowes in 1996, before being decommissioned in 1997. Here she is anchored in Cowes Roads for the 1995 event.



# SCOTTISH RO

Thomas Rinaldi describes a voyage on board historic Scottish-built paddlers that continue to provide point-to-point transport through the Ganges-Brahmaputra delta in Bangladesh.

## STILL GOIN

**O**n the narrow waterways of the Ganges-Brahmaputra delta in Bangladesh, where hordes of riverboats vie with one another to attract passengers and freight, the Rocket boats enjoy a reputation for safety and reliability, even though they seem to be far and away the oldest craft on the river. To those who rely on these vessels for basic transportation, the Rockets are workhorses more than anything else. Yet these are no ordinary boats – they are the last sidewheel riverboats in regular passenger service anywhere in the world.

The Rocket fleet is comprised of four Scottish-built paddle wheelers, relics of the British Raj. Today, the boats come under the auspices of the state-controlled Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation, which operates them on an

overnight run between Dhaka, the national capital, and Khulna, near the southern end of the delta.

In recent years the route has been truncated at a small river town called Morrelganj, not far from Khulna, reportedly due to silting of the river bottom. Though the vessels were converted from steam to diesel in the 1990s, they still retain the prefix ‘ps’ – paddle steamer – before their names.

By the time I embarked on the ps *Ostrich* in March 2015, the Rockets had already survived years of reports in the local press talking of their impending replacement. Some reports bemoaned their high maintenance and operating costs. A new vessel, *Bangali*, in fact joined the fleet in 2014, but the old boats have persevered despite this.

Built in 1928-29, *Ostrich* is considered the pride of the fleet. She and her sister *Mahsud*



**ABOVE** Engine room aboard *Ostrich*.

**RIGHT** *Ostrich* rests overnight at the downriver terminus of Morrelganj.



are larger and somewhat grander than their two counterparts, *Lepcha* of 1938 and the younger *Tern* of 1949. Other running mates, such as *Kiwi*, *Gazi* and *Teal*, which survived into the 1990s, have vanished. But even with their

steam machinery replaced, the four surviving Rockets exude a deeply evocative character – teak decks cambered into high paddle boxes, panelled saloons fore and aft – that makes an indelible impact on passengers accustomed to more mundane



The outbound *Mahsud* (1929) paddling downstream in the lower reaches of the delta.



# ROCKETTS GOING STRONG



forms of transport.

*Ostrich* paddled away from her berth at Dhaka's Sadarghat boat terminal (a sort of Grand Central afloat) at precisely 1900. We reached our first landing, Chandpur, around midnight. Here we waited to meet an intercity train from Chittagong, on the Bay of Bengal, from which we collected passengers bound for various points in the delta.

Like her three surviving running mates, *Ostrich* is the work of William Denny & Brothers, the venerable Clydeside shipyard that existed from 1840 to 1963. In addition to many notable vessels built for domestic routes, Denny developed a speciality in river steamers for service in far corners of the world. These included the American sternwheeler *Delta Queen* of 1927, numerous vessels for the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company in what is now Myanmar, and many steamers dispatched to British India.

*Ostrich* and *Tern* entered service under the flag of the India General Navigation & Railway Co; *Mahsud* and *Lepcha* ran for the Rivers Navigation Co. Operating in tandem, these two firms provided services on an array of routes throughout the Ganges-Brahmaputra delta, as well as on the Hooghly River out of Calcutta, reaching as far upstream as Dibrugarh



*Ostrich* (1929) idles at Barisal, half-way point on her down-river journey to Morrelganj.

on the Brahmaputra and Garhmuktesar, near New Delhi, on the Ganges.

Sunrise found *Ostrich* at Barisal, one of the largest cities in Bangladesh, and about the halfway point in our journey downriver. From this point, the Rocket boats make frequent stops delivering passengers, mail, freight and retail goods to sleepy provincial landings downriver. At a tiny river town called Hularhat, *Ostrich*

deposited our one other western passenger, a German college professor who was bound for an organised tour of the Sundarbans National Park, home to the highly endangered Bengali tiger.

Hularhat is not the end of the line, but it provides convenient overland connections to Khulna, formerly the terminus of the Rocket service, where travellers can book tours into the Sundarbans and to the monumental mosques at



**ABOVE** Passengers aboard *Ostrich* survey Dhaka's busy Sadarghat waterfront prior to departure.





The Ganges Delta

## DELTA PADDLERS

	OSTRICH	MAHSUD	LEPCHA	TERN
HULL NO	1228	1227	1318	1419
BUILT	1928-1929	1927-1929	1937-1938	1947-1949
TONNAGE	630grt	630grt	396grt	460grt
LENGTH	235ft	235ft	190ft	200ft

All built by William Denny & Bros, Dumbarton; assembled by Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers, Calcutta (Kolkata), India



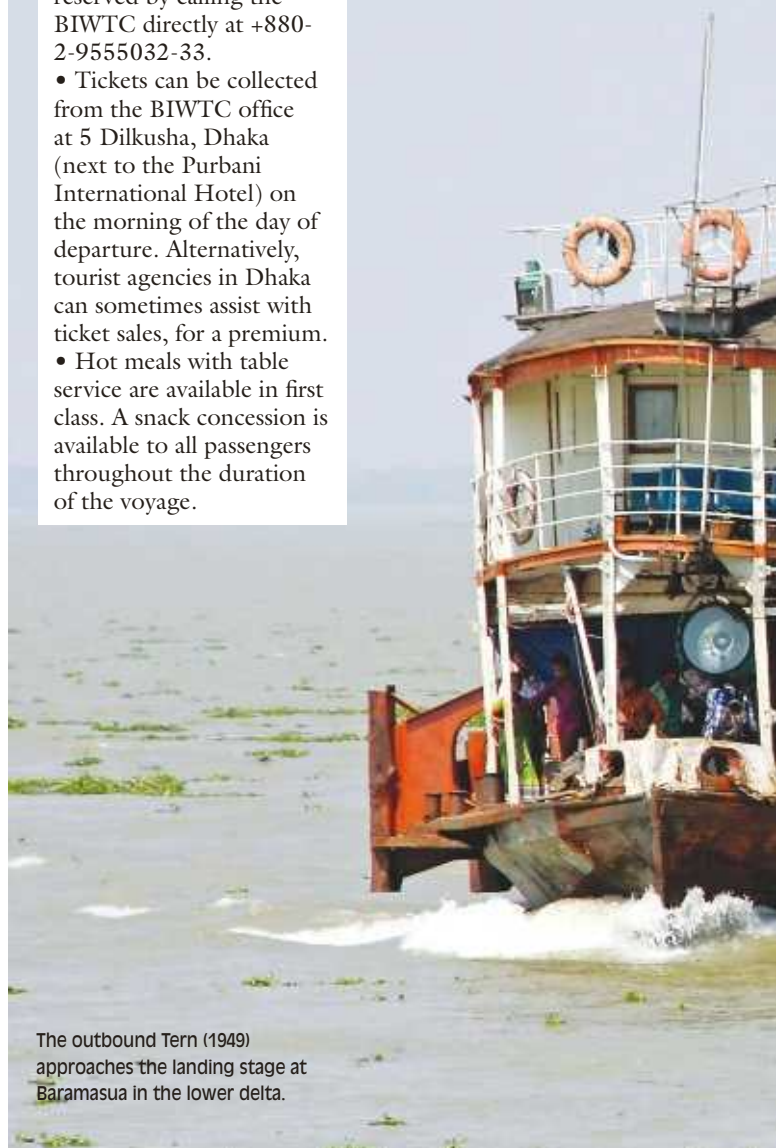
**ABOVE** Fleetmates: Lepcha (1937, on left) and Tern (1949) lay up between voyages on the Buriganga in old Dhaka. Newer river craft can be seen in the distance.

## IF YOU GO . . .

- It is advisable to book first or second class tickets at least one to two weeks in advance. Online ticket sales are slated to begin sometime this year. In the meantime, tickets may be reserved by calling the BIWTC directly at +880-2-9555032-33.

- Tickets can be collected from the BIWTC office at 5 Dilkusha, Dhaka (next to the Purbani International Hotel) on the morning of the day of departure. Alternatively, tourist agencies in Dhaka can sometimes assist with ticket sales, for a premium.

- Hot meals with table service are available in first class. A snack concession is available to all passengers throughout the duration of the voyage.



The outbound Tern (1949) approaches the landing stage at Baramasua in the lower delta.

Bagerhat, both UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

From Hularhat, *Ostrich* paddled her way down to Morrelganj, a small but bustling river town about 19 hours and just over 200 miles from Dhaka, and interim end of the line for the Rockets. There she disembarked the last of her passengers and berthed for the night, before casting off for the return journey the next morning.

How much longer the Rockets will press on is impossible to say. Despite their age, the government-operated Rocket steamers are widely

considered to be safer than newer vessels run by private lines. For its part, the BIWTC acknowledges the iconic status of these saffron-coloured mainstays of the delta, and has indicated that *Ostrich* and *Mahsud* may remain active even as new vessels enter service in the coming years. And in the meantime, word on the river is that dredging will extend the route of the Rockets back to Khulna for 2016. **SW**

• Many thanks to Jonathan Boonzaier, Gordon Stewart, David Asprey and Gabriella Laing for help with this article.





**ABOVE** The first class dining saloon aboard Ostrich boasts fine panelled joinery that evokes shipboard interiors of the 19th century.



**ABOVE** Engine room telegraph on Tern.



**ABOVE** First class observation deck on Ostrich.



**ABOVE** First class stateroom on Ostrich.



**ABOVE** Young sous-chef and wood-fired range in Ostrich's main galley.



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▼ The container ship *Zambia* (76,847gt) departing Algeciras on 4 October 2015, bound for Sines, Portugal and then to Freeport, Bahamas. She was built in 1998 as NYK *Sirius*, becoming MSC *Zambia* in 2010. She became *Zambia* in 2012 and is currently owned by Zodiac Maritime of the UK. CHRIS BROOKS



# Ships Pictorial

Have you an outstanding photo that would grace our gallery? Send your image to Ships Monthly for inclusion in these pages, which showcase the best in ship photography around the world.



▲ The colourful 3,234gt ferry *Panagia Skiadani* leaving the port of Rhodes on 25 September 2015. The 81m by 14m vessel was built in 1986 at the Shinhamo Dockyard, Anan, Japan. She is managed by Dodekanisos Tourist Maritime and owned by the Dodekanisos Seaways Consortium, both of which have head offices in Rhodes. FRANS TRUYENS





▲ The Japanese Hatakaze class guided missile destroyer Shimakaze (DDG 172) at the Fleet Review at Sagami Bay in October 2015. The 4,600-ton vessel was commissioned in 1988. MITSUHIRO KADOTA



► The 2005-built Conquest class cruise ship Carnival Liberty (110,000gt) at PortMiami. She currently operates from San Juan, Puerto Rico on seven-day cruises to the Southern Caribbean. ANDY HERNANDEZ

▼ Irish Ferries' Oscar Wilde (1997/31,914gt) and Epsilon (2011/26,375gt) at Dublin on 21 December 2015. GORDON HISLIP







▼ The refrigerated cargo ship Tuna Princess (2005/4,522gt), built in Japan and currently being used for processing, packing and transporting tuna, arriving at Valletta, Malta on 17 November 2015. GAETANO SPITERI







The four members of the class bought by Anglo-American Oil Co Ltd retained their narrow funnels. This is Esso Tioga, built at Grangemouth where she was also registered.

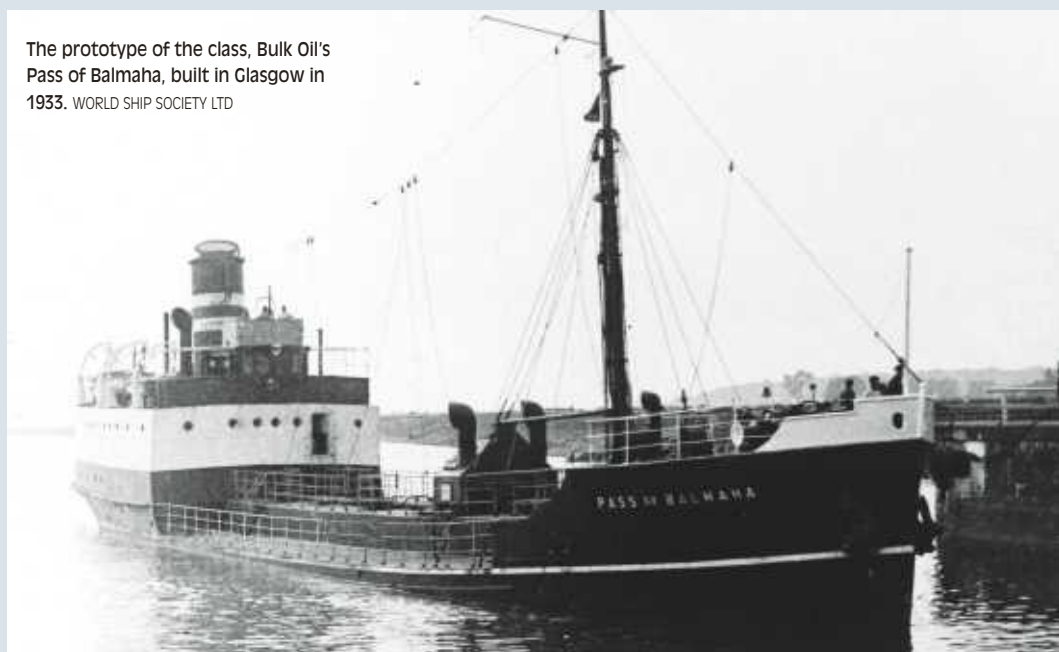
# The Empire Cadets

**Roy Fenton chronicles a class of coastal tanker that became very familiar around ports and harbours in the post-war era.**

Shipbuilding in World War II avoided many of the mistakes made in the previous conflict. Firstly, immediate priority was given to merchant ship production, a stark contrast to the situation in 1914, when it was almost abandoned in favour of warship construction, with dire consequences. And when it was eventually realised in World War I that merchant ships were vital, time was lost in designing new 'standard' ships.

In 1939 there certainly was a move to standardisation, but this was largely based on proven, existing designs, so that drawing office work was minimised and construction expedited. Yards were also allowed to use designs they had already built, provided they met wartime needs. This was fortunate, as the unrestricted

The prototype of the class, Bulk Oil's *Pass of Balmaha*, built in Glasgow in 1933. WORLD SHIP SOCIETY LTD



U-boat war waged relentlessly from the first day meant that every ship that British yards could deliver was needed.

## Ill-fated prototype

When construction turned to coastal tankers, it seemed hard to find a recent design that could be multiplied. Instead, constructors harked back to 1933, adopting *Pass of Balmaha* as a model. At 202ft overall,

she was a relatively large, if rather anachronistic, tanker. She belonged to the Bulk Oil Steamship Company Ltd, one of the few independent British shipowners who embraced the coastal carriage of liquid cargoes, but most importantly had experience of designing ships for this trade.

With her triple-expansion engine, *Pass of Balmaha* was not exactly state of the art. But

this was a type of machinery that British marine engineering firms could produce quickly. Of equal importance, marine engineers in the home trade were totally familiar with these engines. A counter stern also betrayed the age of the design.

Builders were Blythswood Shipbuilding Co Ltd of Glasgow, who had specialised in building tankers, although mostly larger ones than *Pass of*





**ABOVE** British Petroleum bought a number of the class, and the name *Iran* suggests this one was intended for service in the Middle East.



*Balmaha*. Her steam engine came from the nearby works of David Rowan and Co Ltd, and gave her a top speed of 10.5 knots. Sadly, *Pass of Balmaha* did not survive to see any of her wartime sisters completed. On 17 October 1941 she was carrying a much-needed consignment of petrol from Alexandria to the besieged port of Tobruk when she was torpedoed and sunk by the German submarine U 97. Her entire complement of 16 crew plus two gunners was lost.

### Empire Cadets emerge

The first of the class was completed in December 1941 as *Empire Bairn*, the only one to come from the Blythswood yard that had built the prototype. The ship from which the class took its name, *Empire Cadet*, was actually the third completed, by the Grangemouth Dockyard Co Ltd on 22 January 1942. She was not even the first to be launched, that being *Empire Lass*, also from Grangemouth, on 31 July 1941, and delivered on 8 December 1941.

The Grangemouth yard was the most prolific of the three that built the class, turning

out 12, work concluding when *Empire Tavistock* was delivered on 31 March 1945. The only other builder was A. and J. Inglis Ltd on the upper Clyde. They delivered *Empire Maiden* in March 1942, and production at their Pointhouse yard ended in April 1945 with their tenth example, *Empire Shetland*.

As the examples quoted above suggest, there was little consistency in the names bestowed on the class. The names *Empire Cadet*, *Empire Bairn*, *Empire Lass*, *Empire Maiden* and *Empire Damsel* comprised one theme. Islands made up another, with *Empire Bute*, *Empire Jura*, *Empire Mull*, *Empire Orkney* and *Empire Shetland*, notwithstanding that there was a distinct 'Isles' class of coastal tanker built during the war.

Names from the round table legends were bestowed on *Empire Arthur*, *Empire Gawain* and *Empire Fay*, while *Empire Dombey* and *Empire Trotwood* were inspired by characters from Dickens. But others seemed randomly chosen, such as the one-offs *Empire Tavistock*, *Empire Wrestler*, *Empire Coppice* and *Empire Gypsy*. The accompanying table summarises each of the three yards' outputs, and the names and fates of the 23 members of the class.

### Wartime casualties

The relatively large size of the Empire Cadets, certainly

compared with other classes of wartime coastal tanker, meant they were deployed widely, for instance in the Mediterranean and in West African waters. Here, two of the class became serious casualties, but only *Empire Maiden* succumbed to enemy action. On 14 June 1943 she was bombed and sunk off Pantellaria, shortly after the island had been occupied by the Allies.

Again far from home, *Empire Arthur* was loading fresh water at Freetown, Sierra Leone on 22 November 1943 when sea water entered her holds, causing her to capsize and sink alongside Kissy Jetty. Neither accident ended the ships' careers. *Empire Maiden* was raised in 1947, repaired and fitted with another steam engine by Italian owners. After being given an oil engine in 1962, she soldiered on until being broken up in 1974. *Empire Arthur* was also raised by Italians, repaired and put back into service, eventually returning to UK waters as Everard's *Adherity*, surviving until 1962, still with her original steam engine.

A total of 129 coastal tankers were completed to the British Government's account during or shortly after World War II, of which the Empire Cadets were the longest, although not the numerically largest, class. As accompanying lists show, construction of the Empire Cadets was spread over four

**ABOVE** Shellbrit 7, still in wartime condition, navigates the Manchester Ship Canal. Later renamed BP Marketer and Sarroch, she was the last Empire Cadet in service.

**BELOW** In wartime rig, *Empire Shetland*, last of the class built by A. J. Inglis Ltd at Pointhouse, Glasgow. Note the spark arrester on her funnel.



Everard of Greenhithe were major users of the class. Their *Argosity* was lengthened by 30ft in 1957, the only known example to be so modified.

SHIPS IN FOCUS



years, although none were laid down after the end of 1944. As the war progressed, construction of other types of coastal tanker took precedence.

This was particularly so in the case of the CHANTs, the prefabricated vessels built on an industrial scale in anticipation of supplying fuel and water to the armies invading France in June 1944. A total of 43 of these were built as tankers, as intended, with a further 25 hulls completed as dry cargo ships of the Empire Fabric class.

With the war in Europe turning decisively in the Allies' favour, thoughts of ship constructors turned to the war in the Far East. A number of coastal tankers were designed to suit the conditions expected in that theatre, especially the

need to house larger crews. The result was the outwardly similar classes, 'Tankers, Eastern, Steam' (with *Empire Tes...* names) and 'Tankers Eastern Diesel' (*Empire Ted...* names), plus some near-sisters, all with their rather massive bridge/accommodation structures amidships. Eventually, 20 of these eastern types were completed, many too late for war service, with ten cancelled.

### Post-war service

The 21 Empire Cadets afloat at the end of the war readily found buyers. Oil companies were among the first in the queue, with Anglo-American Oil Co Ltd (later Esso Petroleum Co Ltd) taking four, and the Kuwait Oil Co two. Initially, British Petroleum took one, as did a Shell subsidiary operating in West Africa. However, these two companies' joint marketing organisation, Shell Mex and BP Ltd, eventually built up a fleet of six.

Bulk Oil took four examples, unsurprisingly, as they were built to its design, even naming one *Pass of Balmaha* in memory of the prototype. Everards came to the class somewhat later, but rivalled Shell Mex and BP in eventually operating six. Mediterranean owners were also significant users, Italy having seven at one time or another, Greece and France three each, with one also going

to Germany. Two went to the Indian Navy as harbour tankers.

Modifications made to the class post-war were relatively minor. The narrow, wartime funnels with their spark arresters were generally replaced with broader examples, and the signal mast aft was

sometimes moved or omitted altogether. Everard's *Argosity* was lengthened by about 30ft in 1957. Surprisingly, the only example known to have had its steam machinery replaced was the former *Empire Maiden*, following her salvage and repair in Italy, as described above.



**ABOVE** BP Engineer of the Shell Mex and BP coastal tanker fleet. Like her running mates, she received a prominent radar mast and had her foremast shortened.



**ABOVE** Bulk Oil bought *Empire Damsel* and renamed her *Pass of Balmaha* (2) as replacement for their lost prototype.

### MAIN BRITISH USERS OF EMPIRE CADETS

#### F.T. EVERARD AND SONS LTD, GREENHITHE

*Argosity*, *Aureity*, *Adherity*, *Allegrity*, *Allurity*, *Alchymist*

#### SHELL MEX AND BP LTD

BP Distributor, BP Transporter, *Shellbrit 5*, *Shellbrit 6*/BP Refiner, *Shellbrit 7*/BP Marketer, *Shell Fitter*

#### ANGLO-AMERICAN OIL CO LTD/ESSO PETROLEUM CO LTD

*Esso Dakotah*, *Esso Genesee*, *Esso Juniata*, *Esso Tioga*

#### BULK OIL STEAMSHIP CO LTD

*Pass of Balmaha*, *Pass of Kintail*, *Pass of Glenogle*, *Pass of Drumochter*



# OUTPUT BY YARD

The names were carried by the ships when they were under British ownership, unless stated otherwise

EMPIRE NAME	DELIVERED	LATER NAMES	FATE
<b>BLYTHSWOOD SHIPBUILDING CO LTD</b>			
Empire Bairn	12.1941	Chilka (Indian Navy)	Stricken 1976
<b>GRANGEMOUTH DOCKYARD CO LTD</b>			
Empire Lass	1.1942	Esso Juniata, Argosity	b/u Bruges 1969
Empire Cadet	1.1942	Mascara (French), Aureity	b/u Barrow 1968
Empire Arthur	6.1942	Merula (Italy), Adherity	b/u New Lekkerkerk 1962
Empire Gawain	6.1942	Esso Dakotah	b/u Boom, Belgium 1962
Empire Damsel	10.1942	Pass of Balmaha	b/u Dalmuir 1967
Empire Harbour	5.1943	Esso Genesee	b/u Tamise, Belgium 1961
Empire Wrestler	7.1943	Esso Tloga	b/u St Davids on Forth 1963
Empire Settler	11.1943	Iran, Widad, Motol VII (Greece)	b/u Piraeus 1968
Empire Trotwood	5.1944	Amir, BP Distributor	b/u Willebroek, Belgium 1965
Empire Mull	8.1944	Medea (France), Christine (Germany), Pass of Kintail, Passamare (Italy), Kali Limenese (Greece)	Deleted 'Lloyd's Register' 1987: 'continued existence in doubt'
Empire Drury	12.1944	Shelbrit 6, BP Refiner, Cosina (Italy)	b/u Palermo, 1973
Empire Tavistock	4.1945	Sobat, Allegrity	Lost Cornwall 1961
<b>A J INGLIS LTD, GLASGOW</b>			
Empire Maiden	3.1942	Asteria (Italy), Sanjacopo (Italy)	b/u La Spezia 1974
Empire Gypsy	11.1942	Sambhar (Indian Navy)	Stricken 1976
Empire Fay	3.1943	Kleinella, Shelbrit 7, BP Marketer, Sarroch (Italy)	b/u Naples 1983
Empire Coppice	6.1943	Amin, Shell Fitter, Aliki (Greece)	b/u Perama, Greece 1969
Empire Harvest	12.1943	Shelbrit 5, BP Engineer	b/u Antwerp 1965
Empire Dombey	10.1944	Allurity	b/u Bruges 1965
Empire Jura	10.1944	Samshoo, Pass of Glenogle, Marcello Garrolla (Italy), Marcello G (Italy)	b/u Naples 1979
Empire Bute	12.1944	Milliana (France), Rivoli (Algeria), Pass of Drumochter, Santa Giuli (Italy)	b/u La Spezia 1971
Empire Orkney	3.1945	Alchymist	b/u Bruges 1969
Empire Shetland	4.1945	Adib, BP Transporter	b/u Antwerp 1965

Although any ship in the coastal trade suffers minor damage, forever entering harbours and going alongside jetties and wharves, there were just two known examples of serious peacetime casualties among the class, only one of which proved fatal to the ship.

On 13 December 1961 Everard's *Allegrity* was on a voyage from Le Havre to Shell's oil refinery at Stanlow on the Manchester Ship Canal when she grounded on Greeb Point near St Anthony Head, Cornwall during a gale. She refloated at high water, but was holed and went aground on a beach near Dodman Point. Salvage work on the buckled and flooded ship began, but nine days after the initial grounding she capsized and was abandoned as a total loss.

In February 1972 *Marcello G* (originally *Empire Jura*) was undergoing repairs at Naples when heavy weather caused her to heel over and sink. Although declared a constructive total loss, she was raised and repaired by her owners, Sardi Bunkers SpA, who got seven years' further service from her.


Empire Orkney spent her entire peacetime career with Everards as Alchymist.



**ABOVE** Towards the end of the war, priority was given to tankers with enlarged amidships superstructure for service in the Far East. Empire Tedport is seen here as Shell Director.

Remarkably given their anachronistic steam engines and the wartime misadventures of two ships, the entire class of 23 was still intact until *Allegrity* was lost in December 1961. But demolitions began during the next year, with *Adherity* and *Esso Dakotah* going to breakers in the Netherlands and Belgium respectively. The British-owned vessels went in the 1960s, with most of those remaining in the Mediterranean going to local breakers in the 1970s. The two examples with the Indian Navy were removed from the Navy List in the 1970s and undoubtedly scrapped.

The former *Empire Mull* was still listed as the Greek *Kali Limenes* until 1987, when Lloyd's Register doubted her continued existence, and, even if she had not been scrapped, she would have been taken out of service years before. The last working Empire Cadet was almost certainly the former *Empire Fay*, broken up as the Italian bunkering tanker *Sarroch* at Naples in 1983.

With over half the class operating in Home Trade waters in post-war years, the Empire Cadets formed a significant part of the British coastal tanker fleet, also giving good service to Mediterranean owners. Although somewhat outdated when construction began in 1941, these counter-sterned steam tankers proved their value in both war and peace. 

*Acknowledgements • The article has drawn on W. H. Mitchell and L. A. Sawyer's 'The Empire Ships' (2nd edition) and K. Garrett's 'Everard of Greenhithe'.*

# Cabin class rivals

David Williams and Richard de Kerbrech recall six unique and innovative passenger ships built by France, the UK and the United States, which became known as Cabin class liners.



**ABOVE** On board Washington.



**ABOVE** The passenger categories and layout of America were amended in the post-war period, with 516 in the top grade, first class, and 371 and 159 respectively in cabin and tourist class. KENNETH W. WIGHTMAN



**ABOVE** The cabin class smoking room on Washington, like that aboard Manhattan, was characterised by the 'pioneer' spirit of the Wild West, with animal trophies and North American Indian scenes. UNITED STATES LINES



In the early part of the 20th century trends in North Atlantic passenger traffic were changing. Following World War I the earlier First class, Second class and Steerage were redesignated First, Second and Third class. However, Second class was a term unpopular with travellers, who inferred that it was somehow 'second best'. From 1900 some older ships were adapted to Cabin class by having the former First class accommodation renamed Cabin class standard, a class which effectively replaced both First and Second – in other words, they became a single new class.

The first purpose-built Cabin ships were introduced by Canadian Pacific on the Dominion run, being later

challenged by competitors from Cunard. As the popularity of Cabin class increased, improved Cabin ships opened up Cabin class service in the premier Atlantic route to New York

During the late 1920s and early 1930s three pairs of unique and innovative passenger ships, designated Cabin class liners, emerged from France, the UK and the United States. They were *Lafayette* and *Champlain*, *Britannic* and *Georgic*, and *Manhattan* and *Washington*, three steamships and three motor ships.

Conceived at the height of the Great Depression and constructed at a time when work was much needed in the shipbuilding and allied trades, they were overshadowed by the larger, luxurious and express



A close-up view of Britannic's port side. The paint on her hull is streaked and showing evidence of routine wear and tear. This would all be smartened up during her regular overhauls. KENNETH W. WIGHTMAN



**ABOVE** The palm court, another cabin class room aboard Georgic. CUNARD ARCHIVES, UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL



**ABOVE** A corner of Lafayette's grand salon with panel depicting de Lafayette at right. FRENCH LINE



**ABOVE** Georgic's tourist class smoking room was on the lines of a 16th century farmhouse. AUTHORS' COLLECTION



**ABOVE** How the revamped interiors of Britannic looked in her post-war guise. AUTHORS' COLLECTION

liners on the prestigious North Atlantic routes. The first of the Cabin class ships, *Lafayette* of 1927, with its Art Deco style and lavishly appointed public rooms, set a high standard of decor, besides being France's largest motor ship

The introduction of the Cabin class ships cut a dash in the Atlantic passenger traffic, as they offered spacious accommodation and sumptuous

public rooms, in effect offering First class travel in relative luxury, but at much lower fares and with a longer and slower crossing time. Essentially, Cabin class passengers were getting First class accommodation at lower rates, but the ships' impact on the style and standards for Atlantic travel were trendsetting and challenged the major passenger liner companies to rethink their strategies.


The North Atlantic Passenger Conference members, which included the Cunard and French Lines and essentially formed a cartel which recommended or rather pegged North Atlantic steamship fares, were peeved by these newcomers, who were seemingly undercutting fares. In fact, acrimony among the cartel's members threatened its break-up, until they too adopted Cabin class and cabin ships. Indeed,

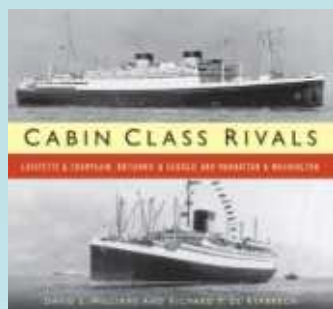
the liners *Normandie* and *Queen Mary* were designated as Cabin ships when they entered service.

This trend continued up until World War II, when the ships were commandeered for war service, but the loss of *Lafayette* by fire in 1938 prevented her use as a troopship. Four of the remaining ships gave yeoman service during the war, *Champlain* was another loss. *Manhattan* was renamed USS *Wakefield*, and



*Georgic* suffered fires, but both were reconstructed as purpose-built troopships. In 1945 only *Britannic* returned to commercial service, but by this time travelling classes had reverted to First, Tourist and Tourist Third, marking the demise of Cabin class travel.

It is perhaps important to put on record the part played by the six innovative Cabin class rivals during an era of depression and austerity, and highlight their rightful place in the history and development of North Atlantic Steam (and motor) navigation. 



**CABIN CLASS RIVALS** Lafayette & Champlain, Britannic & Georgic and Manhattan and Washington, by David L. Williams and Richard P. de Kerbrech, price £19.99, paperback, published by The History Press.



Seen from above, Lafayette on fire in dry dock at Le Havre on 5 May 1938. The efforts of firefighters attempting to bring the blaze under control with hoses appear futile given the scale and intensity of the fire. AUTHORS' COLLECTION

CABIN CLASS RIVALS: THE FACTS						
	BRITANNIC	GEORGIC	MANHATTAN	WASHINGTON	CHAMPLAIN	LAFAYETTE
YEAR BUILT	1930	1932	1932	1933	1932	1929
GROSS TONNAGE	26,943	27,759	24,289	24,289	28,124	25,178
DIMENSIONS	712 x 82.5ft	711 x 82.5ft	705ft x 86.3ft	705ft x 86.3ft	641ft x 82.8ft	613ft x 77.6ft
MAIN ENGINES	Two ten-cylinder, four-stroke, double-acting H&W-B&W oil		Two Parsons, three-stage, single-reduction steam turbines		Two three-stage single-reduction steam turbines	
AVERAGE SPEED	17.46 knots	17.24 knots	21.2 knots	21.9 knots	19.23 knots	16.86 knots
PASSENGERS	1,553	1,542	1,230		1,091	1,079

The final departure from Southampton of Queen Mary on 31 October 1967, viewed from P&O's Oriana. Along with the disposal of her sister Queen Elizabeth the following year, the laying-up of the United States in 1969 and the transition of the France into the cruise ship Norway, the era of cabin class ocean travel was brought to a close then. In truth, as it had been originally conceived it passed in September 1939, when war abruptly ended a quite dramatic era of transatlantic passenger shipping. TIM NOBLE





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With St Michael's Mount in the background, Klyne's salvage tug Anglian Princess was a common sight in the bay a few years ago, when she was operating as the Coastguard's Emergency Towing Vessel (ETV) for the western approaches. ALL PHOTOS BY THE AUTHOR

# Britain's most westerly ports

**Krispen Atkinson provides a view of today's shipping scene in the most westerly ports in the UK, the port of Penzance and its neighbour Newlyn. Both have long maritime histories, and both have adapted to the changes and challenges of the 21st century.**



**TOP** The bulk carrier Magsenger 19 anchored off Newlyn Harbour waiting for orders, December 2015.

**LEFT** The French-flagged Guedel in Penzance's dry dock, after being bought by the IOS Steamship Co. She later emerged as Ivor B.

All traffic is now concentrated in the wet basin area, where a 14.8m entrance accommodates vessels of up to 5.4m draught.

The port is home to one of the oldest dry docks in the world. Established in 1834, the current dry dock, measuring 74.7m in length (245ft) by 11.9m (39ft) in width, completed in 1880 and currently leased by Isles of Scilly Steamship Co, operates under the name of Penzance Dry Dock. The current owner took on the lease in 2009, securing the facility to enable work to be carried out on its own vessels as well as catering for other local craft.

In August 1904 the dry dock was bought by N. Holman & Sons Ltd, who already owned a foundry business within the

port. Holman ran the dry dock until the late 1990s, when its ownership passed through a series of companies. To enter the dry dock takes good shiphandling skills. First, the vessel passes through Ross Bridge, a swing-bridge built in 1881 to connect the port to the town, near the railway station.

Once in the Abbey Basin, the ship needs to make a 90-degree turn to port to enter the dry dock. This is undertaken by bringing the stern around until the ship is parallel to the road, at which point it is aligned to enter the dry dock. To assist the operation, small harbour craft guide the ship through the difficult manoeuvre.

The yard thrived as a repair facility, being ideally located just off the main shipping lane

**W**ith St Michael's Mount as a backdrop, the two most westerly ports on the British Isles can be found on the north-western corner of Mount's Bay. Penzance and Newlyn are two miles apart, and both ports have long histories of significant maritime activity. However, the ports today are very different to what they once were.

The modern port of Penzance was completed in 1884 with the opening of the wet dock. Parts of the quay on the southern side of the harbour date back to medieval times, with the first reference to a quay being made in a charter of King Henry VIII in 1512. But the most significant time for the port's development was the mid-1800s, with the Albert Pier being completed in 1847 and the enclosed wet basin in 1884.



**'Aside from the Isles of Scilly vessels, callers at the port today are a mix of live-aboards, visiting yachts and the odd vessels destined for the dry dock . . .'**

#### PENZANCE PORT IN FIGURES

<b>PASSENGER NUMBERS</b>	Approximately 105,000 (2013)
<b>CARGO</b>	13,100 tonnes (2013)
<b>FISH LANDED (NEWLYN)</b>	10,800 tonnes, valued at £21.6 million (2013)



between the English Channel and Irish Sea. In the 1960s and 1970s coasters would regularly be seen undertaking voyage repairs in the wet basin, or lying in the dry dock, with tankers of Rowbotham's and Shell-Mex BP, and coasters from the fleets of Comben Longstaff and London & Rochester, all being regular visitors. However, as ships have become larger, the number of vessels utilising the facilities have declined. More recently, government contracts have kept the yard ticking over, with work on small support vessels.

A couple of vessels have been built by the yard, including a tug/workboat for use in the port. More recently, the yard has looked to diversify, and the lure of the multi-million pound superyacht industry saw a few



On the south side of Penzance's wet dock, Isles of Scilly Steamship Co's Scillonian III in one of her later liveries.





**ABOVE** Ivor B laid up after completion of construction works on the Isles of Scilly. The vessel was later sold and, renamed *Evora*, remains in Penzance.



**ABOVE** William Sampson Stevenson, a Newlyn-based trawler, heads from the port for the fishing grounds in less than favourable conditions.

## 'The types of ship using the ports of Penzance and Newlyn have changed considerably, especially in the past 50 years'

interesting vessels come to the port for refits. One such vessel still sits in the port today: the former Swedish buoy tender *Vega* arrived in 1999 and never left. Built in 1964, *Vega* was to be converted into an adventure yacht, her ice-class hull enabling her to visit polar regions. She was cut down and completely rebuilt, with a new superstructure added in 2004, four years into the work. But funds eventually ran out, and the vessel still lies in the basin today, partially converted, but representative of the work that the yard can undertake.

### Trinity House Depot

The presence of the dry dock at Penzance was a factor that encouraged Trinity House to develop a presence in the harbour. A depot was opened in 1866, on the western side, where all Trinity House's navigation aids were serviced in the western sector, from Start Point in Devon to Trevoze Head, on Cornwall's north coast. This included the lighthouses of Eddystone, Wolf Rock, Longships and Bishops Rock off the Scillies, as well as lightvessel marking the Sevenstones reef.

For over 100 years Trinity House lighthouse tenders came to the harbour, with the 1961-built *Stella* being the last to do so before Trinity House's operations were centralised in Harwich. The buoy store

on the quayside later became the Trinity House National Lighthouse Museum, but this was closed in 2005 and its exhibits moved a few miles south to the Lizard lighthouse.

The port still saw a good number of commercial cargoes until the 1980s, when coal was still brought in. Much of the growth that propelled the port up until the end of the 19th century was through imports and exports from the mines in the Penwith area north of Penzance. The last mine in the area, Giver, closed in 1990.

Aside from the Isles of Scilly vessels, callers at the port today are a mix of live-aboards, visiting yachts and the odd vessels destined for the dry dock. Very little cargo operation is now undertaken within the harbour. However, in 2015 a major investment was undertaken to modernise the buildings within the shipyard, while the harbour was dredged. There is also a plan to improve the Lighthouse Pier, as well as the receiving areas used by the Isles of Scilly Link.

### Newlyn

Newlyn was built around the fishing industry. Today it is the fifth largest UK fishing port by catch landed and has the biggest fishing fleet in terms of number of vessels. As it is the closest port to the fishing grounds in the Western approaches, fishing vessels will



**ABOVE** Alongside in Newlyn, the former British Army landing craft *Arromanches* waits for a gap in the weather to take more heavy plant to the Isles of Scilly.



**ABOVE** The local yard was busy in 1999, with *Sea Humber* lying on the outer wall for minor repairs to be undertaken, and the south coast dredger *Sand Swift* lying alongside her, waiting to enter the dry dock.



**ABOVE** The former Swedish buoy tender *Vega*, which arrived in Penzance in 1999 for conversion to an expedition yacht, seen in 2014, after work on the project had halted.



## ISLE OF SCILLY LINK

Since 1920 the Isles of Scilly Steamship Company have been running services to the Isles of Scilly from Penzance. The company currently operates two vessels from the mainland to St Mary's, the largest of the islands in the archipelago. The company's two vessels, Scillonian III and Gry Maritha, provide what is in effect a lifeline service, supplying all the needs of the islanders.

Scillonian III is a purpose-built passenger/cargo vessel, which was completed by Appledore Shipbuilders in North Devon. Named by HRH Prince Charles (Duke of Cornwall) on 17

May 1977, the ship has continuously operated on the seasonal service since leaving the shipyard, and has had a variety of liveries. Scillonian III generally operates from Easter until October, running six days a week, with two sailings during the peak season on Saturdays on the two-hour 40-minute passage to St Mary's. When conditions are too bad for aircraft to operate, the ferry is also called in to do an extra shift, sometimes to bring back stranded tourists. In the winter months Scillonian III is laid up in Penzance, where work is undertaken to prepare her for the next season.

Scillonian III's running mate is Gry Maritha, a palletised cargo vessel. She plays an important role, bringing food and goods for the islanders, including fuel, which is carried in transportable fuel tanks which are discharged by the vessel's own deck crane.

Gry Maritha was purchased by the Steamship company in 1989 following service along the Norwegian coast. The vessel's name comes from this past life, being that of the former owner's daughter. The vessel operates all year round, her annual dry-docking and refit being covered by Scillonian, normally in a cargo-only function, either at the end of, or just prior to starting, the next season.



### SCILLONIAN III

<b>BUILT</b>	Appledore Shipbuilders, Appledore, 1977
<b>TONNAGE</b>	1,346gt, 421 net
<b>DIMENSIONS</b>	68m (223.1ft) x 11.85m (38.9ft) x 2.89m (9.5ft)
<b>SPEED</b>	15 knots
<b>CAPACITY</b>	485 passengers
<b>ENGINES</b>	2x 2,440hp Mirrlees Blackstone ESL8Mk2

### GRY MARITHA

<b>BUILT</b>	Moen Slip, Kolvereid, 1981
<b>TONNAGE</b>	590gt, 177 net
<b>SIZE</b>	40.34m (132.35ft) x 9.8m (32.2ft) x 3.63m (11.6ft)
<b>SPEED</b>	9 knots
<b>CAPACITY</b>	6 passengers
<b>ENGINES</b>	2x640hp Caterpillar 3406T

**LEFT** Gry Maritha slowly approaches the entrance to the wet dock after a voyage back from the Isles of Scilly.

**BELOW** Scillonian III at St Mary's, the terminal on the Isles of Scilly. As well as taking passengers to the Isles of Scilly, she also carries cargo in her hold, seen here with its hatches open.



head out hundreds of miles into the Atlantic from the port.

The first settlement in the area was recorded in 1279, and is thought to have grown around a sheltered landing spot for fishing boats working in Mount's Bay. A quay was reported as being in situ by 1435, and the *Mayflower* is reported to have called at the port in 1620 to take on water before its voyage with the Pilgrims to the New World. The port developed around the pilchard trade, which was greatly aided by the building of the railway at Penzance.

Today, the port consists of South Pier and North Piers, which were completed in 1879 and 1880 respectively. These ports provided a large safe sheltered harbour, from which the fishing fleet could

operate. In 1980 HRH Queen Elizabeth opened the Mary Williams Pier, which ran out into the harbour and enabled smaller vessels to operate from the quayside at all states of tide.

The port's largest operator today is W. Stevenson & Sons, who operate a fleet of trawlers. The majority of these are former Dutch vessels. Smaller stern trawlers operate from the port, as well as the crabbers of Rowse Fisheries. The port also receives visits from foreign trawlers, which come to use the port's facilities, loading ice, refuelling and discharging fish.


Alongside the South Pier is a slipway that is used by the local fleet for maintenance. The pier itself, which acts as a breakwater from southerly winds, was busy throughout the 20th century with coasters. These loaded

stone from the nearby Penlee Quarry. The last coasters to load on this berth sailed in the early 1990s. At the height of exports, two or three coasters would be in the bay waiting for the tide.

With recent construction projects on the Isles of Scilly, Newlyn has been a hive of activity, with landing craft loading building materials and heavy plant equipment at the slipway in the north-west corner of the port.

Both ports, in their unique position as the last places of refuge on the south coast of the UK, see many vessels arriving to seek shelter. This is the same for Mount's Bay, into which, during westerly storms, ships heading for the Irish Sea wait for conditions to improve before continuing on their way. Throughout the 2000s it was

common sight to see the MCA Emergency Towing vessels stationed in the bay, waiting for a call. They would bring casualties into the bay, or even into the harbours for repairs. In calmer times, ships also await orders in the expanse of the Mount's Bay, with some as large as 180,000dwt capesize bulk carriers.

The types of ship using the ports of Penzance and Newlyn have changed considerably, especially in the past 50 years. Many are now too big to use these once-thriving but small ports, which have also seen cargoes related to the local mines and quarries decline as well as the downturn in the fishing industry. But both ports have diversified in their own way, and still take some interesting visitors. 

## ships mail



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## Letter of the month

### Cruise business

I would like to make a few observations on the article The Cruise Business: How it all began (SM, Feb). It discussed a complex topic, and I felt there were some omissions in what was written. While the modern cruise industry does trace its origins to the mid-1960s, the pioneering cruise ships that made possible so much of what was to come were neglected: Nieuw Amsterdam, Kungsholm, Oslofjord and Mauretania played a critical role in laying the groundwork for the industry.

Contrary to modern myths, Florida also had a burgeoning cruise industry, starting in the 1950s. The Bahamas three- and four-day cruises were an industry staple, with sailings from the old port of Miami and Port Everglades, as well as on longer Caribbean cruises on ships such as Ariadne, which HAPAG used as a luxury cruise ship in the 1950s.

Costa pioneered early cruises from Port Everglades, first aboard Franca



ABOVE Flavia docking at Nassau on 28 February 1981. ALLAN JORDAN

C, followed by Anna C, and in the later 1960s Flavia and Federico C. Ted Arison actually traces his roots to 1965, with two chartered Israeli passenger-car ferries, Bilu and Nili, and his first Miami cruises were on Nili. It was only when he lost Nili that he made a now famous call to Knut Kloster suggesting Sunward leave her route from Southampton to Spain and come to Miami.

Princes Cruises, formed by Stanley McDonald (incorrectly spelled 'Macdonald' in the article), started a full year before what would become

Norwegian Caribbean Lines, and McDonald actually got started with cruises to the 1962 World's Fair in Seattle. Further, NCL's first Sunward was nothing more than a luxury car ferry, and was able to accommodate just over 500 passengers (206 cabins), not 700 as stated in the article. Even NCL's second ship, Starward, still had a car deck when she was built. Boheme, another major pioneer from Miami starting in 1968, was also not mentioned.

**Allan E. Jordan**  
Roslyn, New York, USA

after 40 years of service. She left Australian waters in 1997, due to the Federal Government wanting to get rid of Australian-crewed vessels. But are there any other passenger ro-ro vessels that are this old and which are still operating in the open sea?

**Bob Silberberg,**  
Tasmania, Australia

### Keewatin latest

The former Canadian Pacific Great Lakes vessel Keewatin (SM, Feb, p.53) has indeed returned to Canada, as stated in the article, but alas she has not 'been returned to service'. She has been further preserved as a maritime museum and 'event facility' at Port McNicholl. Apart from this minor change, it was an excellent article on a fascinating vessel.

**Peter Dawes**  
Edmonton, Canada

### The Union flag

While on board the cruise ship Nautica earlier this year, I noticed that the ship flew a Union flag rather than a red ensign in Liverpool as a courtesy flag. On New Year's Eve, when I was on board Insignia in Curacao, I noticed the chemical tanker Hafnia Taurus, registered in London, was flying a union flag from the stern. Does any reader know if this is a new development?

**Dr Roger I. Cartwright**  
Crieff, Perthshire

### Dazzle and mislead

In answer to Mr Clough's letter about camouflage (SM, Dec 2015), the intention of zig-zag or 'Dazzle' camouflage was not concealment, but to disguise a vessel's true size/type, heading, range and speed. It was introduced in World War I, and its primary intention was as an effective camouflage to combat the new form of naval warfare, submarines.

### More on Hong Kong

The fascinating panorama of warships at Hong Kong, which was probably taken in 1936-7, includes vessels from the fleets of both the UK and USA. The ships of the Royal Navy's China Fleet appear to include the aircraft carrier HMS Hermes (top right), the three-funnelled County class cruiser HMS Cumberland (bottom left), and the destroyer HMS Daring H16 (centre).

The depot ship is HMS Medway, and astern of her appears to be the light cruiser HMS Curacao, or one of her sisters. The USA's Asiatic Fleet includes at least eight three/four-stack destroyers (right and left foreground) and the cruiser USS Houston (centre), but the identity of the supply ship (middle right) is unknown.

HMS Hermes was bombed and sunk off Trincomalee in 1942, HMS Daring was torpedoed in 1940, as was HMS Medway in 1942, and HMS Curacao was sunk after a collision with RMS Queen Mary in 1942. It is probable that some of the

US four-stackers were among those transferred to the Royal Navy in 1940.

**Richard Lingham**  
Truro, Cornwall

This pre-World War II photograph is a challenge in warship identification. The aircraft carrier is not Eagle but HMS Hermes (which has only one funnel, not two). The submarine depot ship is not Maidstone or Forth, but most likely HMS Medway (subsequently torpedoed and sunk in 1942). In the middle is a County class heavy cruiser, moored at a wharf, either Cumberland, Suffolk, Berwick or Cornwall, with the hangar aft. Diagonally from the County across towards the upper middle of the photo is a light cruiser, which I have found the most difficult of any of the ships to identify.

Above this mystery ship and to the right is, I believe, a French Duguay Trouin class light cruiser (probably not La Motte-Picquet). Below and to the right of this ship is a US heavy cruiser,

probably one of the six Northampton class (Houston or Chicago). Below this are two British destroyers, and to the left of these are two US 'four-stacker' flush deck destroyers. On the right half of the photo are six more of these, moored in two groups of three.

**Alan Concannon,**  
Forestville, Australia

### Australian-built ship

I have been receiving copies of Ships Monthly for many years and in June 1989 I actually visited your then office at Burton-on-Trent on my way home to Tasmania. So I wonder if any readers can help me? I am interested in the passenger/vehicle vessel, built at the State Dockyard, Newcastle, New South Wales, Australia, in July 1976 as Bass Trader (IMO 73562520). She is still operating across the Adriatic from Durres to Ancona and Bari as Bridge.

Her longevity shows the durability of a well-built Australian vessel, which is still operating on a regular basis





British zoologist John Graham Kerr, who is often credited with 'creating' Dazzle camouflage, in a 1914 letter to First Lord of the Admiralty Winston Churchill explained that 'disruptive camouflage' was to confuse, not conceal: 'It is essential to break up the regularity of outline and that can be easily effected by strong contrasting shades. A giraffe or zebra or jaguar looks extraordinarily conspicuous in a museum, but in nature, especially when moving, is wonderfully difficult to pick up.' As in nature, dazzle patterns were individual to a vessel.

It was introduced during World War I by the Royal Navy, followed by the US Navy after its entry into the war, but the effectiveness of dazzle camouflage was never thoroughly evaluated. It was also used by the Royal and US Navies in World War II, as well as to a lesser extent by the Imperial Japanese Navy and Kriegsmarine.

With the advent of technology, naval aviation, rangefinders and radar, dazzle camouflage was less effective, and by mid-1944 the US Navy directed that only its vessels operating in the Atlantic would retain their dazzle camouflage, with those moved to the Pacific repainted in US Navy Grey.

**Dave Kalata**  
**Coppell, USA**

## Adelaide not Melbourne

I have been an avid reader of Ships Monthly for many years and always look forward to the next publication. In the article on Australian shipbuilding (SM, Nov 2015), the ASC shipyard at Osborne is said to be near Melbourne, which is the capital of Victoria.

Actually Osborne is closer to Adelaide, the capital of South Australia. The distance from Osborne to Adelaide is 15 miles (24km) and to Melbourne 452 miles (726km). A battle is raging as to which state will build both the



The steamship Astrea travelled on by Douglas Brekke.



Mintha, sistership of Minthame, seen in 1947.

## Irrawaddy's Glasgow connection remembered

I was intrigued to read in Ships Mail (SM, Feb) a request from John Allan for information on the Irrawaddy Paddle Steamers built by Yarrow & Co in Glasgow. Yarrow's connection with the Irrawaddy goes back to 1876, when a sternwheeler was built at the Company's London yard for King Thibaw of Burma.

A second order for a sternwheeler was placed with the Yard in 1886, but this time the customer was the Irrawaddy Flotilla Co. The IFC was Scottish-owned, and was managed by P. Henderson & Co from Glasgow. Following their relocation to Glasgow in 1906, Yarrow built a further 12 sternwheelers, all for the IFC, between 1908 and 1920.

During World War II the young Eric Yarrow, a Major in the Royal Engineers, was stationed in Burma. In 1942, as the Japanese advanced, the Allied forces were forced to evacuate the peninsula. The Royal Engineer's

demolitions team were given the task of scuttling ships on the Irrawaddy River to prevent them being used by the Japanese, in what was known as 'an act of denial'. Since his father, Sir Harold Yarrow, ran a shipbuilding company, Eric was selected to lead the team to scuttle the vessels, and he did just that.

In 1946 Eric Yarrow returned to Scotland and joined his father at Yarrow & Co in Glasgow. Almost immediately, the Company's relationship with the IFC was restarted, as they needed to replace the ships destroyed during the evacuation in 1942, and the company received an order for new ships: six screw-driven ships and four side-wheelers.

It turned out that the IFC had managed to repair some of their damaged vessels. Eric recounted to me that his father had been rather critical of his efforts to blow up the ships in 1942. If only he had done a

more thorough job, the Company would have had more new ships to build. Some fathers are never happy.

In 1947 Yarrow built the side-wheelers Mintha, Minthame, Mingalay and Minlat for the Irrawaddy Flotilla Co. The vessel pictured in SM is Minthame, now renamed Myat Yadana. She is the last remaining paddle steamer in Myanmar, and has been meticulously restored to run trips on the Ayeyarwaddy River.

**Iain B. Murray, Ex Yarrow Shipyard**



**ABOVE** The main engines for the side-wheelers being assembled in the Engine Shop at Scotstoun.

submarines and follow-on destroyers. Osborne has an excellent setup and is ready to go, but the politics of these matters is not straightforward.

**Denis Robinson**  
**Northfield, South Australia**

## Astrea memories

Your article on crossing to Finland (SM, Feb) and Astrea (3,190gt) brought back memories of my early days living in Bergen. I travelled frequently on Astrea between there and Newcastle from 1948 to 1953. My first crossing, when I was three months old, was to visit my mother's Scottish family – not that I remember it! My father was a technician in the electrical department of Det Bergenske Dampskibsselskab (Bergen Line) and sailed on Astrea as relief radio officer, as he did on Venus.

Astrea was launched on 16

September 1939 by Crichton-Vulkan for Finland Line. In 1944 she was sold to Rederi Svea of Stockholm on the understanding that she would be sold on to Bergen Line after the war.

In October 1945 she undertook her maiden voyage from Bergen to Newcastle, repatriating Norwegian citizens who had escaped from occupied Norway during the war, including my father, who had joined the Free Norwegian Army in Scotland after escaping with Shetlands Larsen on one of the Shetland Bus vessels.

In 1946 Astrea started a weekly Bergen-Haugesund-Stavanger-Newcastle service. In 1953 she was replaced by Leda and was transferred to the Bergen-Rotterdam service. She was sold in 1967 to P/F Skipafelagid Føroyar Torshavn as Tjaldur (meaning Oystercatcher) for the Copenhagen-

Faroes service. After a major engine breakdown in 1969, she was scrapped.

According to my father she was an excellent sea vessel and good time-keeper, but her seven-cylinder Krupp oil engine was heavy on fuel.

**Douglas Brekke**  
**Stornoway, Isle of Lewis**

## Royal Mail Ship Sabor

Regarding Tom Wreford's request for information about the carrying of a locomotive (SM, Feb), the ship in question is Sabor (III) of the Royal Mail line. She was one of eight ships of the Sabre class, all of which were built as Standard B type ships. She was launched on 24 January 1920 as War Whale II and she was torpedoed in the Indian Ocean in 1943, when en route from Mombasa to Rio de Janeiro.

**Duncan Haws, Gosport, Hants**

# chartroom

## April ports of call

Compiled by Donna and Andrew Cooke

Date	Arr/dep	Ship	From/to	Flag	Operator	GT
<b>SOUTHAMPTON</b>						
1	0630/1630	Azura	Caribbean/Iberia	BA	P&O	115,055
3	0730/1730	Balmoral	x /Lisbon	BA	Fred. Olsen	43,537
4	0930/2130	Aidamar	Hamburg/Le Havre	IT	AIDA	71,304
5	0800/1600	Saga Pearl II	x /Ferrol	MA	Saga	18,627
6	0630/1630	Oriana	Eastern Med/Caribbean	BA	P&O	69,840
6	0700/1000	Rotterdam	La Coruna/Rotterdam	NL	HAL	61,849
8	0630/1630	Ventura	Canary Islands/Western Med	BA	P&O	116,017
8	0630/1630	Azura	Iberia/Creek Islands	BA	P&O	115,055
10	0600/1800	Britannia	Western Med/Western Med	SOU	P&O	143,730
11	0630/1200	Boudicca	Maderia/ x	BA	Fred. Olsen	28,551
11	0800/1200	Saga Sapphire	Gibraltar/Falmouth	MA	Saga Cruises	37,049
11	0900/ x	Ovation of the Seas	x / x	BA	RCI	167,800
11	0930/2130	Aidamar	Hamburg/Le Havre	IT	AIDA	71,304
16	0500/1600	Emerald Princess	Spain & Portugal	BA	Princess	113,561
16	0730/1730	Balmoral	Ferrol/Ponta Delgada	BA	Fred. Olsen	43,537
16	0800/2000	World Odyssey	x / x	BA	Semester at S	22,498
16	0900/1700	Ovation of the Seas	France & Belgium	BA	RCI	167,800
18	0930/2130	Aidamar	Hamburg/Le Havre	IT	AIDA	71,304
22		Ventura	Western Med/Canary Islands	BA	P&O	116,017
22	0700/1630	Ovation of the Seas	France & Spain	BA	RCI	167,800
22	0800/1600	Saga Pearl II	Gibraltar/Falmouth	MA	Saga	18,627
23	0630/1630	Britannia	Western Med/Norway	SOU	P&O	143,730
23	0500/1630	Emerald Princess	Portugal/Channel Islands	BA	Princess	113,561
23	0600/1700	Celebrity Silhouette	x /Scandinavia	MA	Celebrity	122,210
24	0800/2000	MSC Splendida	x /Le Havre	PA	MSC	137,936
25	0600/1630	Azura	Eastern Med/Western Europe	BA	P&O	115,055
25	0930/2130	Aidamar	Hamburg/Le Havre	IT	AIDA	71,304
26	0630/1630	Aurora	Atlantic Islands/Eastern Med	BA	P&O	76,152
26	0500/1630	Emerald Princess	Channel Islands/Canary Islands	BA	Princess	113,561
27	0800/2000	MSC Musica	Vigo/Zeebrugge	PA	MSC	92,409
29	0700/1630	Ovation of the Seas	France & Belgium/ x	BA	RCI	167,800
30	0630/1630	Britannia	Norway/Western Europe	SOU	P&O	143,730
30	0630/1630	Azura	Western Europe/Norway	BA	P&O	115,055
30	x / x	Celebrity Eclipse	x /Norwegian Fjords	MA	Celebrity	121,878
<b>ST PETER PORT</b>						
2	x / x	Azura	Southampton/La Coruna	BA	P&O	115,055
19	0700/2000	Astoria	Honfleur/Tresco	MAD	CMV	16,144
22	x / x	Emerald Princess	La Rochelle/Southampton	BA	Princess	113,561
23	0800/1800	Marco Polo	Isle of Scilly/Honfleur	BA	CMV	22,080
23	0800/1700	AIDAvita	Falmouth/Dover	IT	AIDA	42,289
25	x / x	Emerald Princess	Southampton	BA	Princess	113,561
26	x / x	Azura	Southampton/Amsterdam	BA	P&O	115,055
<b>TILBURY</b>						
1	x / x	Magellan	Norwegian Fjords/Newcastle	BA	CMV	46,052
4	x / x	Marco Polo	Rouen/Ulvik	BA	CMV	22,080
10	x / x	Marco Polo	Bergen/Ulvik	BA	CMV	22,080
16	x / 1600	Marco Polo	Norwegian Fjords/Kirkwall	BA	CMV	22,080
23	x / x	Astor	Lisbon/Invergordon	BA	CMV	20,704
25	0800/1600	Marco Polo	Honfleur/Ulvik	BA	CMV	22,080
<b>GREENWICH</b>						
27-8	x / x	Viking Star	Le Havre/Haugesund	NO	Viking Cruises	47,842
<b>POOL OF LONDON</b>						
30/4	x / May	L'Austral	Dover/Ostend	FR	Ponant Cruises	10,944
<b>NEWCASTLE</b>						
02	1200/2000	Magellan	Majestic Fjordland	BA	CMV	46,052
09	0800/1700	Magellan	Majestic Fjordland	BA	CMV	46,052
16	0800/2000	Magellan	Fjordland Splendour	BA	CMV	46,052
24	0800/1700	Magellan	Iceland & Northern Isles	BA	CMV	46,052
<b>INVERGORDON</b>						
25	0800/1800	Astor	Tilbury/Stornoway	BA		20,704
29	0800/2000	Boudicca	Kirkwall/Scrabster	BA	Fred. Olsen	28,551
29	0800/1900	MSC Splendida	Norwegian Fjords/Norwegian Fj	PA	MSC	137,936
29	0800/1800	Aidavita	Hamburg/Lerwick	IT	AIDA	42,289
<b>BRISTOL (Avonmouth)</b>						
12	x / 2200	Astoria	x /Tobermory	MAD	CMV	16,144
21	0800/1800	Astoria	Tresco/Scottish Islands	BA	CMV	16,144
30	0230/x	Astoria	Tobermory/	MAD	CMV	16,144
<b>SCRABSTER</b>						
30	x / x	Boudicca	Invergordon/Tobermory	BA	Fred. Olsen	28,551
<b>DUNDEE</b>						
3	1045/2300	Magellan	Newcastle/Ulvik	BA	CMV	46,052
10	0400/1600	Magellan	Newcastle/Flam	BA	CMV	46,052
17	1115/2330	Magellan	Newcastle/Ulvik	BA	CMV	46,052
25	0400/1745	Magellan	Newcastle/Flam	BA	CMV	46,052
<b>ISLES OF SCILLY</b>						
01	1300/1800	Marco Polo	Avonmouth/Honfleur	BA	CMV	22,080
20	0700/1700	Astoria	Guernsey/Bristol	MAD	CMV	16,144
22	0900/1800	Marco Polo	Dublin/St Peter Port	BA	CMV	22,080
26	0700/1400	Albatros	Cork/Portsmouth	BA	Phoenix Reisen	28,518
29	0900/1400	Astor	Dublin/Honfleur	BA		20,704

Date	Arr/dep	Ship	From/to	Flag	Operator	GT
<b>FALMOUTH</b>						
12	0830/2045	Boudicca	x /Madeira	BA	Fred. Olsen	28,551
22	0800/1800	Aidavita	La Coruna/St Peter Port	IT	AIDA	42,289
23	0800/1600	Saga Pearl II	Southampton/St Nazaire	MA	Saga	18,627
24	0730/1930	Boudicca	Lisbon/Liverpool	BA	Fred. Olsen	28,551
<b>DARTMOUTH</b>						
16	0800/1600	Nat. Geog. Explorer	x / x	BA	Lindblad	6,471
<b>KIRKWALL</b>						
16	0800/1400	Astoria	Stornoway/Honfleur	MAD	CMV	16,144
18	0800/1800	Marco Polo	Tilbury/Stornoway	BA	CMV	22,080
26	1000/1800	Astoria	Thorshavn/Stornoway	MAD	CMV	16,144
28	x / x	Boudicca	Liverpool/Invergordon	BA	Fred. Olsen	28,551
30	0800/1700	MSC Splendida	Invergordon/Greenock	PA	MSC	137,936
<b>STORNOWAY</b>						
15	0700/1900	Astoria	Tobermory/Kirkwall	MAD	CMV	16,144
19	0700/1900	Marco Polo	Kirkwall/Tobermory	BA	CMV	22,080
26	0900/1700	Astor	Invergordon/Tobermory	BA		20,704
27	0700/1900	Astoria	Kirkwall/Tobermory	MAD	CMV	16,144
<b>TOBERMORY</b>						
10	x / x	Hebridean Princess	Skye/ Isle of Eriska	GLA	Heb Island Cr	2,112
14	0900/1700	Astoria	Bristol/Stornoway	MAD	CMV	16,144
20	0700/1700	Marco Polo	Stornoway/Dublin	BA	CMV	22,080
27	0900/1900	Astor	Stornoway/Dublin	BA		20,704
28	0800/1700	Astoria	Stornoway/Bristol	MAD	CMV	16,144
<b>PORTSMOUTH</b>						
15	0700/1830	Minerva	St Malo/Rouen	BA	ALH	12,892
19	0800/1800	Amadea	Hamburg/La Coruna	BA	Phoenix Reisen	29,008
27	0700/2000	Albatros	Tresco/Bremerhaven	BA	Phoenix Reisen	28,518
28	0800/1600	Minerva	St Malo/Kiel Canal	BA	ALH	12,892
<b>LERWICK</b>						
24	0900/1800	Astoria	Portree/Torshavn	MAD	CMV	16,144
30	0900/1800	Aidavita	Invergordon/Thorshavn	IT	AIDA	42,289
<b>DOVER</b>						
1	0700/1700	Braemar	x /Stavanger	BA	Fred. Olsen	24,344
10	0700/1700	Braemar	Arendal/Kiel Canal	BA	Fred. Olsen	24,344
16	0700/1700	Braemar	Honfleur/La Rochelle	BA	Fred. Olsen	24,344
24	0930/2130	AIDAvita	Guernsey/IJmuiden	IT	AIDA	42,289
25	0700/1700	Braemar	Rouen/Flensburg	BA	Fred. Olsen	24,344
30	0700/1900	L'Austral	x /London	FR	Ponant Cruises	10,944
<b>DUBLIN</b>						
21	0900/1700	Marco Polo	Tobermory/Tresco	BA	CMV	22,080
<b>PORTREE</b>						
23	0900/1400	Astoria	Bristol/Lerwick	MAD	CMV	16,144
<b>LIVERPOOL</b>						
26	x / x	Boudicca	Falmouth/Kirkwall	BA	Fred. Olsen	28,551
<b>SMALL SHIP CALLS</b>						

**Hebridean Princess** 1 Colonsay; 2 Iona; 3 Coll; 4 Salen; 5 Oban; 6 Port Ellen; 7 Iona; 8 Skye; 9 Skye; 11 Isle of Eriska; 12 Oban; 13 Muck; 14 Skye; 15 Gairloch; 16 Plockton; 17 Skye; 18 Lochaline; 19 Oban; 20th-25 TBC; 26 Oban; 27 Rum; 28 Raasay; 29 Gairloch; 30 Ullapool

**FLAG CODES** BA Bahamas, FR France, IT Italy, MA Malta, MAD Madeira, NL Netherlands, NO Norway, PA Panama, SOU Southampton **NB** This information is given in good faith, but might change, and Ships Monthly cannot be held responsible for any changes to ship arrivals or departures that may occur **NOTES** x details not known



Marco Polo is a regular visitor to UK ports.



# ships library

# book of the month

## The Union-Castle Line: Sailing Like Clockwork

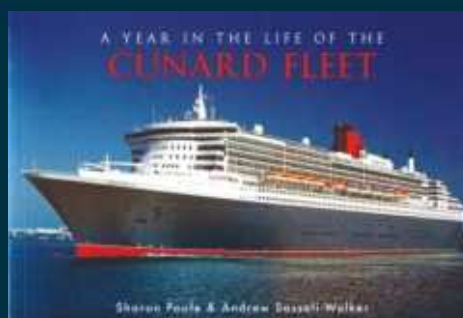
Mike Roussel and Sam Warwick

Published by The History Press, The Mill, Brinscombe Port Stroud, Gloucestershire GL5 2QG, [www.thehistorypress.co.uk](http://www.thehistorypress.co.uk), 192-page hardback, price £25 plus postage

This book is one of a number which were published in 2015 to coincide with the 175th anniversary of the founding of Cunard Line. This one is promoted as a 'guided tour' of

a complete year for the Cunard Line, but the title is confusing, as only a third of the book covers this topic. This core of the volume, which is divided into the four seasons, is also somewhat confusing, as it contains a jumble of facts which seem to have little to do with each season.

The remainder of the volume consists of an overview of the current fleet and a potted history of the company. The history in particular is not very comprehensive and contains misleading facts, such as the statement that Trafalgar House 'wasted no time in consolidating the



company's position in the market, disposing of most of the cargo fleet', whereas the 1970s was in fact a renaissance for the company's cargo fleet, with the introduction of several new tankers, reefers and container ships.

Despite these reservations, it is a nicely produced book, with a variety of interesting photographs, which could possibly have been better used in a larger format, in a photographic book which focussed solely on the current Cunard fleet. PN

resulted in a significant decline in the numbers of sailors passing through. The book serves as a tribute to the many thousands of crew members who served on the old vessels.

All the photographs are by the author, and were taken during his work at the port as a shipwright, then as a stevedore, and illustrate the huge range of shipping which used the port, from reefer and general cargo vessels, to domestic and foreign flag bulkships carrying concentrates and other minerals, as well as heavy-lift vessels serving Tasmania's extensive hydro-electric power schemes, car carriers, ro-ro ferries and a diversity of visiting naval and deep sea fishing vessels. Although focused on the port, this volume is a worthy reflection of global shipping prior to the changes caused by the 'box boat' revolution. AB

• **First Published December 2012**  
by the author at PO Box 352  
Beauty Point, Tasmania 7270. [www.portdalrympleshipping.wordpress.com](http://www.portdalrympleshipping.wordpress.com), ISBN 978-0-9871085-4-82, 96 pages, softback, price (including P&P to the UK) A\$70.



## Chunnel Beaters: The Pride of Dover and the Pride of Calais

John Hendy

In 1987 Townsend Thoresen's Pride of Dover and Pride of Calais were the first of a new generation of super-ferry, their owner's response to the building of the Channel Tunnel, and thus labelled the 'Chunnel Beaters'. Sadly, their entry into service was overshadowed by the English Channel's worst ever ferry disaster. New owners P&O lost little time in creating P&O European Ferries and the new ships enjoyed illustrious careers. This well-produced account of the two ships contains an impressive selection of photos to accompany the detailed text, part of which includes a year-by-year account of the ships' service. NL

• **Published by Ferry Publications**, PO Box 33, Ramsey, Isle of Man IM99 4LP; tel 01624 898445, [info@lilypublications.co.uk](mailto:info@lilypublications.co.uk), 60-page softback, price £9.95 plus postage.



## West Highland Steamers: A Pictorial Record 1967-2007

The West Highland Steamer Club

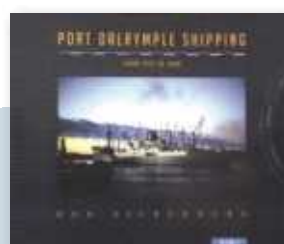
The West Highland Steamer Club was formed in 1967 by a group of enthusiasts who followed the activities and operations of David MacBrayne's fleet of vessels in Scotland's Western Isles. This volume is an illustration of those operations and consists of 150 mainly colour photographs, which are accompanied by detailed captions describing the vessels operated by the company over the 40 years since the Club was formed. Most of the photos were taken by two prominent long-standing enthusiasts, regrettably now late members of the club.

The book provides a glorious compilation of unique photographs set in a range of picturesque locations throughout the Highlands and Islands. They show MacBrayne's ships now long gone, reflecting times both before

and after the amalgamation of the operations of the MacBrayne and Caledonian Steam Packet fleets.

For the coastal steamer and ferry enthusiast, this is a useful volume and provides an interesting background to today's successful operations of Caledonian MacBrayne. AB

• **Published by Amberley Publishing**, The Hill, Merrywalks, Stroud, Gloucestershire, GL5 4EP. [www.amberley-books.com](http://www.amberley-books.com), 96 pages, paperback, £14.99, also available in Kindle, Kobo and iBook formats.

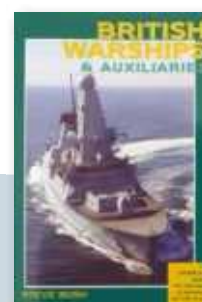


## Port Dalrymple Shipping 1973 to 1980

Bob Silberberg

Port Dalrymple, on the north coast of Tasmania facing Australia's notorious Bass Strait, is a relatively little-known port. It is positioned at the entrance to the Tamar River and serves as the port for Launceston, 35 miles upriver.

This book is a pictorial celebration of conventional shipping serving the port for the ten years prior to the introduction of containerisation, which



## British Warships & Auxiliaries

Steve Bush

The 37th annual edition of British Warships & Auxiliaries has just been published. The book begins with a review of the state of the Royal Navy, followed by sections detailing the fleets of the Royal Navy, Royal Fleet Auxiliary and support vessels, all with pennant numbers and silhouettes. It follows the same format as previous editions, with each entry including a colour photograph, together with a class listing, technical specifications and brief notes. Similar sections cover the aircraft and weapons operated by the Royal Navy. It is the standard reference guide to the Royal Navy. EF-L

• **Published by Maritime Books Ltd**, Lodge Hill, Liskeard PL14 4EL, tel 01579 343663, email [ian@navybooks.com](mailto:ian@navybooks.com), [www.navybooks.com](http://www.navybooks.com), 120 pages, price £8.99.

## Mystery Ship



This month's mystery ship is an old warship that looks as if she is being towed away for scrapping. But no name or number is visible, so which ship is it? What is her identity? Where, and when, was the photo taken? When was the vessel originally built, and with which navy did she serve? What was her ultimate fate? Was she scrapped or was she preserved?



Send answers, including a postal address, by email to [sm.ed@kelsey.co.uk](mailto:sm.ed@kelsey.co.uk), or by post to **Mystery Ship, Ships Monthly, Kelsey Publishing, Cudham Tithe Barn, Berrys Hill, Cudham, Kent TN16 3AG.**

## February's mystery ships



The February Mystery Ship feature asked for identification of two craft seen in Manchester. **Peter Sommerville**, of Greenock, wrote: 'Cricklade (above right) is an ex RMAS Fleet Tender of the same name (pendant number A381). She was built as a Clovelly class tender in 1971 and served in Portland, Greenock and

Rosyth during her career. She was in a poor state when she was sold to private owners and it is good to see her looking in such good condition.'

**John Barnes**, of Bromley, agrees: 'One of the mystery ships is the former RMAS 75ft fleet tender Cricklade. She was built by Charles D. Holmes (No.1026), where I was Assistant Naval



Architect until early 1971, when I left to work on The Motor Ship. Holmes built three other 75-footers: Denmead, Fulbeck and Loyal Factor. We also built six 100ft Insect class tenders for the RMAS: Bee, Cricket, Gnat, Ladybird, Cicala and Scarab, and the three Roysterer fleet tugs for RMAS: Roysterer, Rollicker and Robust.'

**Anthony Heard** wrote: I believe the Mystery Ship (above left) could be the former fishing vessel Monleigh, which has been at various places awaiting conversion including Plymouth, Dartmouth and Bideford. A stablemate of hers is being brought back to life at Bideford after being rescued from an Appledore scrapyard.

## DIGITAL 'MARINE NEWS' NOW IN FULL COLOUR

The World Ship Society's monthly journal 'Marine News' has been the enthusiast's best source of shipping news for 65 years. Now available in full colour to members as a PDF delivered by e-mail, it is cheaper, delivered earlier and more up to date. Digital membership of World Ship Society costs just £20 per year and for that annual subscription, you get all the other benefits of membership: branch activities, significant price reductions on other Society publications, photographic offers as well as access to unrivalled information facilities. Get a trial digital copy of 'Marine News' by emailing your name and address to [membershipsecretary@worldshipsociety.org](mailto:membershipsecretary@worldshipsociety.org) or write to the Membership Secretary, World Ship Society, 17 Birchdale Road, Appleton, Warrington, Cheshire WA4 5AR (UK) and see how for just £20, membership of the World Ship Society can greatly enhance your knowledge of world shipping.

### NEW DIGITAL FULL COLOUR SUPPLEMENT TO 'MARINE NEWS' DELIVERED AS A PDF BY E-MAIL EVERY MONTH WITH YOUR DIGITAL COPY OF 'MARINE NEWS'

The new digital supplement to 'Marine News' has been introduced to allow publication of supplementary photographs, fleet lists & long feature articles covering modern and historical subjects. The monthly Digital Supplement takes nothing from the main journal and is a bonus. The July 2014 digital supplement consists of 42 pages and contains: (a) an illustrated Fleet List and History of AMBROSE, DAVIES & MATTHEWS Ltd of Swansea and (b) 45 supplementary photographs grouped under the title of the news section in which they occur in 'Marine News' (28 – Sales transfers & renamings, 1 casualty, 2 demolitions, 6 new ships and 8 warships).

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# A view from the Bridge

**Captain Alistair Clark, master of Cunard's Queen Elizabeth, talks to Paul Brown about his career during a Baltic cruise taking in Hamburg, Stockholm, Tallinn, St Petersburg, Copenhagen, Kiel and Zeebrugge.**

## What attracted you to a career at sea?

I did not come from a seafaring family, having been born in Amersham, Buckinghamshire, and going to school in Potters Bar. I enjoyed sailing as a leisure pursuit and thought about becoming a ship's officer. P&O had an attractive training programme, and I joined the company in 1974 as a deck cadet. My initial training was undertaken in Liverpool at the Riversdale Nautical School, and I served on a variety of cargo and passenger ships in the P&O fleet. On qualifying as a deck officer in 1978, I decided to join passenger ships.

## Why did passenger ships appeal?

It was the end of the liner era and I wanted to experience that. I preferred life as an officer on a passenger liner or cruise ship, because the ports visited are much more interesting than those by cargo ships, and the contact with passengers adds interest. But it was a risky option, because everyone thought at the time that passenger ships were on the way out.

## Which ships have you served on?

My first officer appointment was on Arcadia, and I spent many years with Princess Cruises on the west coast of the USA as a junior officer. In 1991 I was transferred to the P&O fleet and Canberra, and rose through the ranks, eventually being promoted to staff captain in 1995. In 1999 I was appointed as newbuild staff captain to stand by Aurora at the Meyer Werft shipyard, and was the first staff captain on her maiden voyage. During this maiden season I was promoted to captain. Since then I have commanded Victoria, Oceana, Crown Princess, Dawn Princess, Ventura (including standing by during her building), Azura and Oriana. Then I worked with the Carnival Corporation training facility and bridge simulator in Amsterdam, and visited Cunard and P&O ships to undertake specific bridge training. In 2012 I was appointed master of Queen Elizabeth.

## What are the special attractions of Queen Elizabeth?

The interior of the ship is fabulous, and we absolutely adhere to the

Cunard traditions, but in a modern way. The Cunard brand and tradition is a great attraction, not just to our British markets but also to our key international markets, such as the USA, Germany and Japan. The crew are very proud of the ship and enjoy work on board, which pays off in customer service and staff retention.

## What are the challenges of your job?

The amount of work involved in keeping up with changes in regulations and technology has grown enormously. This was not quite what I imagined when I embarked on my career as a ship's officer. Carnival Corporation (owner of 104 ships, including those in the Cunard and P&O fleets) is committed to reducing its carbon footprint, but that is difficult when the life of a ship is 25 years and technological improvements are best incorporated at the time of building.

## How do you relax on ship and shore?

A cruise is very busy, and there is little time for relaxation. However, I bring my

bicycle with me and like to cycle when the ship is in port. Back home, I catch up with my wife and two children, aged 16 and 14, near Southampton; I enjoy gardening and leave instructions on what has to be done while I am away, although they might not always be followed to the letter!





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